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GENERAL ORDERS

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HEADQUARTERS
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON, DC, 12 January 1997

AWARD OF THE MEDAL OF HONOR

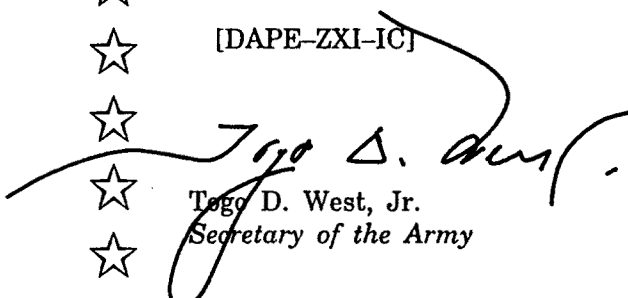
By direction of the President, under the Joint Resolution of Congress approved 12 July 1862 (amended by act of 3 March 1863, act of 9 July 1918, and act of 25 July 1963), the Medal of Honor for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty, is awarded (posthumously) by the Department of the Army in the name of Congress to:

Major Charles L. Thomas, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism on 14 December 1944, while serving with Company C, 614th Tank Destroyer Battalion (Towed), 103d Infantry Division, near Climbach, France. While riding in the lead vehicle of a task force organized to storm and capture the village of Climbach, France, then First Lieutenant Thomas' armored scout car was subjected to intense enemy artillery, self-propelled gun, and small arms fire. Although wounded by the initial burst of hostile fire, Lieutenant Thomas signaled the remainder of the column to halt and, despite the severity of his wounds, assisted the crew of the wrecked car in dismounting.

Upon leaving the scant protection which the vehicle afforded, Lieutenant Thomas was again subjected to a hail of enemy fire which inflicted multiple gunshot wounds in his chest, legs, and left arm. Despite the intense pain caused by these wounds, Lieutenant Thomas ordered and directed the dispersion and emplacement of two antitank guns which in a few moments were promptly and effectively returning the enemy fire.

Realizing that he could no longer remain in command of the platoon, he signaled to the platoon commander to join him. Lieutenant Thomas then thoroughly oriented him on enemy gun dispositions and the general situation. Only after he was certain that his junior officer was in full control of the situation did he permit himself to be evacuated. First Lieutenant Thomas' outstanding heroism was an inspiration to his men and exemplifies the highest traditions of the Armed Forces.

[DAPE-ZXI-IC]


Togo D. West, Jr.
Secretary of the Army

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