

As confirmed in Department of the Army General Order 32, 1973, the President of the United States has awarded the

PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION (NAVY)

for extraordinary heroism during the period 8 March 1965 to 15 September 1967 to THE THIRD MARINE DIVISION (REINFORCED) and its assigned and attached units: **71st Aviation Company (for the period 28 July 1967 to 1 August 1967)**
The citation reads as follows:

For extraordinary heroism and outstanding performance of duty in action against the North Vietnamese Army and Viet Cong forces in the Republic of Vietnam from 8 March 1965 to 15 September 1967. Throughout this period, the Third Marine Division (Reinforced), operating in the five northernmost provinces of the Republic of Vietnam, successfully executed its three-fold mission of occupying and defending key terrain, seeking out and destroying the enemy, and conducting an intensive pacification program. Operating in an area bordered by over 200 miles of South China Sea coastline, the mountainous Laotian border and the Demilitarized Zone, the Third Marine Division (Reinforced) successfully executed eighty major combat operations, carrying the battle to the enemy, destroying many of his forces, and capturing thousands of tons of weapons and material. In addition to these major operations, more than 125,000 offensive counter guerrilla actions, ranging from squad patrols and ambushes to company-sized search and destroy operations, were conducted in both the coastal rice lands and the mountainous jungle inland. These bitterly contested actions routed the enemy from his well-entrenched positions, denied him access to his source of food, restricted his freedom of movement, and removed his influence from the heavily populated areas. In numerous operations, the Third Marine Division (Reinforced) demonstrated the great efficacy of combined operations with units of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam. In July 1966, the Third Marine Division (Reinforced) moved to the north to counter major elements of the North Vietnamese Army moving across the Demilitarized Zone into the Province of Quang Tri; its units fought a series of savage battles against the enemy, repeatedly distinguishing themselves and, time and again, forcing the enemy to retreat across the Demilitarized Zone. Imbued with an unrelenting combat spirit and initiative and undeterred by heavy hostile artillery and mortar fire, extremely difficult terrain, incessant heat and monsoon rains, the Third Marine Division (Reinforced), employing courageous ground, heliborne and amphibious assaults, complimented by intense and accurate air, artillery and naval gunfire support, inflicted great losses on the enemy and denied him the political and military victory he sought to achieve at any cost. The outstanding courage, resourcefulness, and aggressive fighting spirit of the officers and men of the Third Marine Division (Reinforced) in battle after battle against a well-equipped and well-trained enemy, often numerically superior in strength, and the great humanitarianism consistently shown to the peoples of the Republic of Vietnam, reflected great credit upon the Marine Corps and were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.