

HEADQUARTERS
 TASK FORCE OREGON (PROVISIONAL)
 APO San Francisco 96374

GENERAL ORDERS
 NUMBER 703

18 September 1967

AWARD OF THE SILVER STAR

1. TC 320. The following AWARD is announced.

KEYES, WALTER B. , SPECIALIST FOUR E4, United States Army,
 Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2d Battalion, (Airborne), 502d
 Infantry, 1st Brigade 101st Airborne Division APO 96374

Awarded: Silver Star

Date action: 11 July 1967

Theater: Republic of Vietnam

Reason: For gallantry in action against a hostile force on 11 July 1967 near Duc Pho, Republic of Vietnam. Prior to an all-out attack on his unit's perimeter by a reinforced North Vietnamese Army Company, Specialist Keyes detected two enemy soldiers sneaking up on the defenses; he immediately killed them with a grenade. As he did so the perimeter was taken under tremendous attack by grenade, mortar and automatic weapons fire. In the initial stages of the battle, the friendly element suffered heavy casualties; among them, the medic. Specialist Keyes, with no concern for his own safety, began crawling through the heavy fire giving medical aid to the wounded. Observing three wounded men lying in an area exposed to the enemy fire, he unhesitatingly crawled approximately ten meters out in front of the perimeter and pulled one of them to safety. As he returned for the second, an exploding grenade wounded him. Disregarding his wounds and displaying great personal bravery, he continued on and recovered the man. A third time Specialist Keyes crawled through the intense fire to retrieve the last wounded soldier but found him too serious to be moved. He quickly administered what medical aid he could and then placed rucksacks around the soldier to protect him from further injury. When his section Sergeant was wounded, Specialist Keyes assumed his duties and distributed ammunition, gave encouragement, and directed fire into the enemy positions. Specialist Keyes was wounded a second time by grenade fragments as he tried to move to, and check on, his wounded comrade still lying outside the perimeter. Even though badly wounded, Specialist Keyes continued to move throughout the perimeter giving his men encouragement and assisting them whenever needed. The courage and determination displayed by Specialist Keyes resulted in the saving of numerous lives and inspired his men to such a degree that they successfully defended their positions against a numerically superior hostile force. Specialist Keyes never relented in his heroic, determined effort to resist the enemy and to give aid to his wounded comrades. The outstanding gallantry and personal valor demonstrated by Specialist Keyes has distinguished him and reflected the utmost credit upon himself, Task Force Oregon, and the United States Army.