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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
Headquarters 101st Airborne Division
APO San Francisco 96383

GENERAL ORDERS
NUMBER 1665

17 June 1968

SECTION I

THE SILVER STAR MEDAL

1. TC 320. The following A ARDS are announced.

ERBACH, WILLIAM W. CAPTAIN CHAPLAIN CORPS Headquarters and Headquarters Company 2d Brigade 101st Airborne Division APO San Francisco 96383

Awarded: The Silver Star Medal
Date action: 21 February 1968
Theater: Republic of Vietnam
Reason: For gallantry in action against an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam on 21 February 1968. Chaplain Erbach distinguished himself while serving as chaplain with the 2d Battalion (Airborne) 501st Infantry near Hue, Republic of Vietnam. The battalion was making an assault on a North Vietnamese Regimental base camp and was encountering severe enemy fire from a strong, well entrenched bunker system. Fighting became very intense and drew to close quarters as casualties began to mount. Company D was making the main assault, and this is where Chaplain Erbach went in an effort to inspire the men. He continually moved along the line encouraging the men, but as the casualties increased Chaplain Erbach, unarmed and in complete disregard for his own safety, moved out across the bullet swept field to help care for and evacuate the wounded. Time and again he crossed the field, aiding the wounded and materially helping in every way possible. While assisting one of the fallen soldiers, Chaplain Erbach was himself seriously wounded after he had been repeatedly advised to leave the forward area. After receiving first aid and being taken to the rear, he refused medical evacuation and remained on the field caring for further wounded soldiers as they were brought to his position for evacuation. Only after all the wounded had been evacuated, five full hours after being grievously wounded himself, did Chaplain Erbach consent to being evacuated. His courage and inspiration were of great significance in contributing to the success of the battalion's assault. Chaplain Erbach's personal bravery and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.
Authority: By direction of the President of the United States under the provisions of an Act of Congress established 9 July 1918.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

OFFICIAL:

W. P. TALLON, JR
Colonel, GS
Chief of Staff

M. K. LABAR
LTC, AGC
Adjutant General

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