The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the
Silver Star Medal to

JOHN FORBES KERRY
LIEUTENANT JUNIOR GRADE
UNITED STATES NAVAL RESERVE

for service as set forth in the following:

CITATION

"For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action while serving as
Officer in Charge of United States Navy Patrol Craft Fast 94 and Officer
February 1969, Patrol Craft Fast 23, 43 and 94, in conjunction with Underwater
Demolition Team 13 and Vietnamese Regional and Popular Forces personnel,
conducted an operation on the Ca Mau Peninsula as part of Operations SEA, LORDS.
While transiting the Bay Hap River en route to an insertion point along the
Dong Cung River, these craft with thirty Regional/Popular Force personnel
embarked in each unit came under heavy enemy small arms fire from the river
banks. The Officer in Tactical Command, Lieutenant (junior grade) KERRY
directed his units to turn to the beach and charge the Viet Cong positions.
Lieutenant (junior grade) KERRY expertly directed the fire of his craft at the
fleeing enemy while simultaneously coordinating the insertion of the
embarked troops. While the Regional and Popular Forces conducted an area
sweep, Patrol Craft Fast 43 remained on station to provide fire support and
Patrol Craft Fast 23 and 94 moved upstream to investigate an area from which
gunshots were coming. Arriving at the area, Lieutenant (junior grade) KERRY's
craft received a 8.50 rocket craft aboard. Once again Lieutenant (junior
grade) KERRY ordered his units to charge the enemy positions and summoned
Patrol Craft Fast 94 to the area to provide additional firepower. Patrol
Craft Fast 94 then beached in the center of the enemy positions and an enemy
soldier sprang up from his position ten feet from Patrol Craft Fast 94
and fled. Without hesitation Lieutenant (junior grade) KERRY leaped ashore,
pursued the man behind a hootch and killed him, capturing a 8.50 rocket
launcher with a round in the chamber. Lieutenant (junior grade) KERRY then
led an assault party and conducted a sweep of the area while the Patrol Craft
Fast continued to provide fire support. After the enemy had been completely
routed, all personnel returned to the Patrol Craft Fast to withdraw from the
area. While backing off the beach, these units again came under a hail of
fire, this time from the opposite river bank. Lieutenant (junior grade)
KERRY immediately coordinated the firepower of his units and suppressed the
enemy fire. Later, after disembarking personnel and while exiting from
the Bay Hap River, the Patrol Craft Fast were again taken under fire. Lieu-
tenant (junior grade) KERRY immediately maneuvered his craft through several
strafing runs which completely silenced the enemy. As a result of this operation, ten Viet Cong were killed and one wounded with no friendly casualties. In addition, numerous sampans, structures and bunkers were destroyed as well as confiscation of substantial quantities of combat essential supplies. Lieutenant (junior grade) KERRY's devotion to duty, courage under fire, outstanding leadership, and exemplary professionalism directly contributed to the success of this operation and were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

For the President

E. R. Zumwalt, Jr.
Vice Admiral, U. S. Navy
Commander U. S. Naval Forces, Vietnam