

Radio Operator Killed Saving Crew of CH-46



THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY

WASHINGTON, DC 20350

The President of the United States takes pride in presenting the
SILVER STAR MEDAL posthumously to

CORPORAL TERRY L. SMITH
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action while serving as a radio operator with Company "M", Third Battalion, Twenty-sixth Marines, Third Marine Division, Fleet Marine Force in the Republic of Vietnam. On 20 February 1968, on Hill 881S near Khe Sanh, Corporal Smith observed a Marine helicopter landing in a zone on which he knew North Vietnamese Army gunners had registered heavy mortars. He realized that the aircraft would almost certainly be destroyed if it remained in the landing zone, and attempted unsuccessfully to contact the pilot by radio. Aware that the enemy rounds were probably already on the way, he restrained a Marine junior to him from going out on to the zone, and leaving the safety of his bunker ran across the open ground signaling manually to the helicopter crew to take off immediately. As the helicopter took off and before Corporal Smith could reach cover, he was fatally wounded by mortar fragments, gallantly sacrificing his life so that the crew might live. By his extraordinary courage in the face of overwhelming odds, his uncommon concern for others, and his self sacrificing efforts, Corporal Smith reflected great credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.

For the President,
/s/ **J. William Middendorf**
Secretary of the Navy