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Silver Star Award Citation

Master Sergeant Joseph W. Lupyak

The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, July 8, 1918 (amended by act of July 25, 1963), takes pleasure in presenting the Silver Star to Master Sergeant Joseph W. Lupyak, United States Army, for gallantry in action on 21 November 1970 as a member of an all-volunteer joint U.S. Army and Air Force raiding force in the Joint Chiefs of Staff-directed heliborne assault mission to rescue United States military personnel held as prisoners of war at Son Tay prison in North Vietnam. This valiant effort was motivated by deep compassion for his imprisoned fellow men-at-arms, and by a strong sense of military duty and national pride. Sergeant Lupyak, while maneuvering his element, came under automatic weapons and small arms fire from the building complex. Sergeant Lupyak, with complete disregard for his personal safety, stood up and directed the machine gunners and grenadiers of his element in order to provide covering fire. He then assaulted the building, throwing a fragmentation grenade through the window. While moving around the building, he encountered several enemy soldiers. He eliminated them and continued to move into the building. Once inside, he encountered more armed enemy soldiers. With accurate fire he neutralized the enemy within the building. Sergeant Lupyak then received word from his platoon leader to pull back to the landing zone for extraction. His accurate automatic fire with his own weapon enabled his elements to withdraw safely. Sergeant Lupyak's conspicuous bravery and inspiring leadership under fire enabled him to complete successfully his mission with no friendly casualties. Sergeant Lupyak's daring skill, extraordinary heroism against an armed hostile force, and extreme devotion to duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit on himself and the United States Army.