

NAVY CROSS



ALFRED P. LA PORTE, JR.

Sergeant, U.S. Marine Corps
Company H, 2nd Battalion, 4th Marines
Quang Tri Province, Republic of Vietnam, 25 February 1969
Entered service at: New York, New York

Citation:

The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the Navy Cross to Alfred P. LaPorte, Jr. (2076173), Sergeant, U.S. Marine Corps, for extraordinary heroism while serving as Weapons Platoon Sergeant with Company H, Second Battalion, Fourth Marines, THIRD Marine Division (Reinforced), Fleet Marine Force, in connection with combat operations against the enemy in the Republic of Vietnam. During the early morning hours of 25 February 1969, while elements of the Second Battalion were occupying a defensive position at Fire Support Base Neville in Quang Tri Province, the Marines came under a vicious ground attack by a North Vietnamese Army sapper company supported by mortars, grenades, and satchel charges. Reacting instantly, Sergeant LaPorte commenced directing devastating counter-mortar fire and illumination on the assaulting force as it neared the battalion's perimeter wire, and as the Marines' supply of mortar rounds became depleted, he fearlessly moved about the fire-swept terrain to ensure the rapid re-supply of mortar ammunition. When an enemy round detonated in an 81-mm. mortar emplacement and ignited an uncontrollable fire, Sergeant LaPorte quickly directed the men of his mortar crew to evacuate the position and led them to a covered location, then returned and organized a firefighting crew to extinguish the blaze. Observing two wounded Marines lying in positions dangerously exposed to the North Vietnamese fire, he boldly maneuvered through the hazardous area and assisted his injured companions to a location of relative security. As he reached the command post, an 81-mm. mortar round impacted in the vicinity. He unhesitatingly seized the extremely hot projectile and, despite severely burning his hands, threw it over an embankment, thereby preventing injury or destruction to nearby personnel and equipment. His heroic actions and calm presence of mind during a prolonged critical situation inspired all who observed him and saved the lives of numerous Marines. By his courage, selfless concern for his fellowmen, and unwavering devotion to duty in the face of grave personal danger, Sergeant LaPorte upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.