

PAYNE, PATRICK J.

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Citation:

The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the Distinguished Service Cross to Patrick J. Payne (RA19821190), Specialist Fourth Class, U.S. Army, for extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations involving conflict with an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam. On 7 February 1966, specialist Payne, a member of Company B, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 327th Infantry, 101st Airborne Division, was accompanying his unit on a search and destroy mission near My Canh, Republic of Vietnam. Following a trench line, his platoon was suddenly subjected to an intense hail of small arms and machine gun fire from insurgents concealed in well-fortified positions. The platoon was pinned down in an exposed position and men were being killed and wounded by the grazing fire inflicted by the insurgents. With complete disregard for his own personal safety, Specialist Payne assaulted the Viet Cong machine gun and completely neutralized the deadly weapon by throwing a grenade through the front opening of the bunker. He then killed two insurgents attempting to protect the bunker by firing his rifle while rolling away from the exploding bunker. His initial assault and successful destruction of the machine gun bunker enabled his platoon to advance and completely rout the Viet Cong. Specialist Four Payne's extraordinary heroism 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.

Headquarters, US Army, Pacific, General Orders No. 145 (June 24, 1966)