



CPT William W. Fraker Class 71-55

The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, July 9, 1918 (amended by act of July 25, 1963), takes pleasure in presenting the Distinguished Service Cross to Captain (Field Artillery) William W. Fraker (ASN: 0-4010786), United States Army, for extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations involving conflict with an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam, while serving with 145th Combat Aviation Battalion. After an attack which took place at approximately 0100 hours, 10 June 1965, the Vietnamese hamlet of Dong Xoai was overrun by a Viet Cong force of approximately regimental size and a nearby military compound was being subjected to a heavy barrage of insurgent fire. At about 1000 hours, Captain Fraker and two other American pilots were assigned the mission of flying their armed UH-1B helicopters to the battle area; conducting a low level reconnaissance to determine the Viet Cong strength, fire capability and effectiveness; and selecting and marking troop landing zones. Two different helicopter troop lifts of Vietnamese army personal, whose forces totaled approximately battalion size strength, were dispatched to the selected landing sites which were previously flare marked by Captain Fraker and the other two Americans. After being at the battle site for only a few minutes, the friendly Vietnamese troops were completely annihilated due to the manpower superiority of the insurgent force. Word was received that several Americans and Vietnamese were still holding the besieged compound. Plans were then initiated to evacuate the besieged force. Captain Fraker volunteered to fly his aircraft to escort three rescue helicopters. Upon reaching the embattled compound all aircraft became subjected to a heavy volume of hostile fire and each received hits from the insurgent barrage. After landing, only two of the three rescue craft were able to evacuate the personnel from the compound. The third was badly damaged and grounded during the operation. One American and three Vietnamese soldiers remained in the compound to cover the airlift of the heavily overloaded and damaged evacuation helicopters. Realizing the fate of the gallant defenders and the fact that his was the only aircraft immediately available for any further evacuation attempt, Captain Fraker with complete disregard for his own personal safety, maneuvered his helicopter through the thick hail of hostile fire to a landing between two earth mounds within the compound. Once on the ground, the UH-1B became the subject of all insurgent fire and a group of Viet Cong made a suicidal charge to the airship. Captain Fraker then rallied his crewmen in a desperate attempt to ward off the onrushing horde while he expertly piloted the dangerously overloaded helicopter precariously and slowly once again through the heavy concentration of hostile small arms and automatic weapons fire. Despite the superior Viet Cong firepower, Captain Fraker successfully piloted his helicopter through the murderous barrage and effected the safe and final evacuation of all personnel from the besieged compound. Captain Fraker's extraordinary heroism and gallantry in action were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

General Orders: Headquarters, U.S. Army, Pacific, General Orders No. 310 (October 22, 1965)