

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
COMPANY B 1ST BATTALION (AIRBORNE) 503D INFANTRY
APO San Francisco 96250

SE-BAI

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S T A T E M E N T

On 17 March 1968, Company B 1st Battalion (Airborne) 503d Infantry, 173d Airborne Brigade, was conducting a search and destroy operation in the vicinity of Kontum Republic of Vietnam, During the day the company was in heavy contact with a reinforced NVA Company while trying to take Hill 1000. The company met heavy resistance from small arms and automatic weapons fire plus some rifle grenades and mortar rounds. The enemy was well entrenched on the objective and the company had advanced as far as it could for the day. The decision was made to dig-in and hold what ground had been gained. The company had pushed up so close to enemy positions that many positions were dug from the prone position. The enemy wasn't more than twenty meters away in the thick jungle. Darkness began to set in. When it was good and dark the enemy started to probe the perimeter with grenades and small arms. Their objective was to dislodge us from our present position and push us back down the hill. Platoon Sergeant L.S. Roby's sector of the perimeter was the most vulnerable because of the proximity of the enemy. He was acting Platoon Leader. All the enemy's efforts were directed toward PSG Roby's sector. All during the night the enemy probed the perimeter and made six attempts to penetrate the perimeter. During this time PSG Roby was moving from hole to hole checking his men. He kept this up all night never letting up to sleep. PSG Roby was dangerously exposing himself to enemy fire by moving around. His untiring efforts in repeatedly checking on his men and their positions is attributed to denying the enemy an opportunity to launch a successful probe. Had PSG Roby not dangerously exposed himself in checking and rallying his men, the company would of lost what ground it had gained during the day. On several occasions he had to dash for cover because he was caught in the open as a barrage of enemy grenades came flying in the perimeter. At times his men had to abandon their positions because of the grenades, but PSG Roby always went back to the position with the man to help him reestablish himself and the position. When morning came, there was four NVA dead in front of his sector. The ability of PSG Roby as a brave and determined combat leader is what held his platoon together through the night and kept the company from being overrun.

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