

X-22370

CITATION

On the morning of the 27th May, 1951, 10 Pl of "D" Coy 1st Bn The Worcestershire Regiment were ambushed by approximately 50 bandits. No. 15/978 Awang anak Rawang (Team Tracker) was moving behind the Section Commander of the leading section. When the ambush was sprung the leading scout was killed instantly and the Section Commander fatally wounded. Awang anak Rawang was hit through the thigh bone but the bullet passed right through the bone without shattering it. At the same time Pte Hughes, moving behind Awang anak Rawang, was hit below the knee, the bullet completely shattering the bone. Awang anak Rawang, though wounded and lying exposed under heavy rifle and automatic fire, collected his own weapons and that of Pte Hughes and dragged Pte Hughes into the cover of the jungle. Awang, disregarding completely his own wound in view of the impending bandit attack, took up a fire position to defend Hughes. There he remained, firing on every attempt made by the bandits to approach, kill himself and Hughes and secure their arms. Due to this determined and courageous conduct he successfully drove off several such attacks. Ultimately Awang was again wounded, the bullet shattering his right arm and rendering further use of his rifle or posing impossible. Despite loss of blood from his unhealed wounds, he dragged himself over to Pte Hughes, took a grenade from his pouch and with his teeth pulled out the pin. He reared his position on guard, the grenade in his left hand, and defied the bandits to approach. So resolute was his demeanour that the bandits, who had maintained their attacks for some forty minutes, withdrew leaving Awang in possession of the battle-field.

The coolness, fortitude and offensive spirit displayed by Awang anak Rawang is of the highest order. Despite being twice severely wounded, he disregarded completely his own wounds and his life, showing the utmost self-sacrifice, courage and resolution to continue the fight and protect Pte Hughes to the end.

There can be no question that by his own actions he saved the life of Pte Hughes, who required all his strength to keep a tourniquet on his shattered leg, he saved his own life and he prevented their weapons falling into bandit hands. His conduct is an example of the highest courage. The devotion to duty and disregard of his own life shown will inspire all who hear of it and is most worthy of recognition.

During my time in the Far East it has been my privilege to recommend many awards for His Majesty the King to give for brave actions.

Of all these actions by soldiers and security forces of many nations, the action which is honoured today stands out as one of the finest.

This is Awang's day and we salute him with all respect and friendship for his bravery.

But his action characterises the spirit of all Dyak trackers in Malaya.

Whenever I go amongst the fighting regiments in Malaya I find the Dyaks taking part in the fighting with skill and bravery. All regiments have a respect and friendship for them which is deep and universal.

Your men who come to us are doing a task which plays a most important part in our war against the Communists. I bring you from my commanders in Malaya messages of friendship and esteem. I can now tell them that I have seen you at home and tell them of this great ceremony.

I therefore give to all of you who have been Dyak trackers and to all who will be most sincere messengers from the Army in Malaya and to all your families and your race - Good fortune.

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Barker