GENERAL ORDERS

No. 53

HEADQUARTERS
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON, DC, *8 August 1969*

AWARD OF THE MEDAL OF HONOR

By direction of the President, under the Joint Resolution of Congress approved 12 July 1862 (amended by act of 3 March 1863, act of 9 July 1918 and act of 25 July 1963), the Medal of Honor for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty is awarded by the Department of the Army in the name of the Congress, posthumously, to:

Private First Class *Leslie A. Bellrichard*, United States Army, who distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity while acting as a fire team leader with Company C, 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry, during combat operations in Kontum Province, Republic of Vietnam, on 20 May 1967. Private *Bellrichard* was with four fellow soldiers in a foxhole on their unit's perimeter when the position came under a massive enemy attack. Following a thirty-minute mortar barrage, the enemy launched a strong ground assault. Private *Bellrichard* rose in the face of a group of charging enemy soldiers and threw hand grenades into their midst, eliminating several of the foe and forcing the remainder to withdraw. Failing in their initial attack, the enemy repeated the mortar and rocket bombardment of the friendly perimeter, then once again charged against the defenders in a concerted effort to overrun the position. Private *Bellrichard* resumed throwing hand grenades at the onrushing attackers. As he was about to hurl a grenade, a mortar round exploded just in front of his position, knocking him into the foxhole and causing him to lose his grip on the already armed grenade. Recovering instantly, Private *Bellrichard* recognized the threat to the lives of his four comrades and threw himself upon the grenade, shielding his companions from the blast that followed. Although severely wounded, Private *Bellrichard* struggled into an upright position in the foxhole and fired his rifle at the enemy until he succumbed to his wounds. His selfless heroism contributed greatly to the successful defense of the position, and he was directly responsible for saving the lives of several of his comrades. His acts are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Army.

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By Order of the Secretary of the Army:

W. C. WESTMORELAND,
General, United States Arm
Chief of Staff.

Official:
KENNETH G. WICKHAM,
Major General, United States Army,
The Adjutant General.

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