

GENERAL ORDERS

No. 76

HEADQUARTERS
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON, DC, 3 December 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 posthumously by the Department of the Army in the name of Congress to:

Sergeant *Gordon D. Yntema*,

United States

Army who distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity on 16-18 January 1968 while assigned to Detachment A-431, Company D, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), 1st Special Forces, in the Republic of Vietnam. As part of a larger force of civilian irregulars from Camp Cai Cai, he accompanied two platoons to a blocking position east of the village of Thong Binh, where they became heavily engaged in a small arms firefight with the Viet Cong. Assuming control of the force when the Vietnamese commander was seriously wounded, he advanced his troops to within fifty meters of the enemy bunkers. After a fierce thirty-minute firefight, the enemy forced Sergeant *Yntema* to withdraw his men to a trench in order to afford them protection and still perform their assigned blocking mission. Under cover of machinegun fire, approximately one company of Viet Cong maneuvered into a position which pinned down the friendly platoons from three sides. A dwindling ammunition supply, coupled with a Viet Cong mortar barrage which inflicted heavy losses on the exposed friendly troops, caused many of the irregulars to withdraw. Seriously wounded and ordered to withdraw himself, Sergeant *Yntema* refused to leave his fallen comrades. Under withering small arms and machinegun fire, he carried the wounded Vietnamese commander and a mortally wounded American Special Forces advisor to a small gully fifty meters away in order to shield them from the enemy fire. Sergeant *Yntema* then continued to repulse the attacking Viet Cong attempting to overrun his position until, out of ammunition and surrounded, he was offered the opportunity to surrender. Refusing, Sergeant *Yntema* stood his ground, using his rifle as a club to fight the approximately fifteen Viet Cong attempting his capture. His resistance was so fierce that the Viet Cong were forced to shoot in order to overcome him. Sergeant *Yntema's* personal bravery in the face of insurmountable odds and supreme self-sacrifice were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect the utmost credit upon himself, the 1st Special Forces, and the United States Army.



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By Order of the Secretary of the Army:

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

Official:

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

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