GENERAL ORDERS
No. 17

HEADQUARTERS
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON, DC, *23 April 1970*

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:

Specialist Five *John J. Kedenburg*, [redacted], United States Army, Command and Control Detachment North, Forward Operating Base 2, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), 1st Special Forces, who distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in the Republic of Vietnam on 13 June 1968, while serving as advisor to a long-range reconnaissance team of South Vietnamese irregular troops. The team's mission was to conduct counter-guerilla operations deep within enemy-held territory. Prior to reaching the day's objective, the team was attacked and encircled by a battalion-size North Vietnamese Army force. Specialist *Kedenburg* assumed immediate command of the team which succeeded, after a fierce fight, in breaking out of the encirclement. As the team moved through thick jungle to a position from which it could be extracted by helicopter, Specialist *Kedenburg* conducted a gallant rear guard fight against the pursuing enemy and called for tactical air support and rescue helicopters. His withering fire against the enemy permitted the team to reach a preselected landing zone with the loss of only one man, who was unaccounted for. Once in the landing zone, Specialist *Kedenburg* deployed the team into a perimeter defense against the numerically superior enemy force. When tactical air support arrived, he skillfully directed air strikes against the enemy, suppressing their fire so that helicopters could hover over the area and drop slings to be used in the extraction of the team. After half of the team was extracted by helicopter, Specialist *Kedenburg* and the remaining three members of the team harnessed themselves to the sling on a second hovering helicopter. Just as the helicopter was to lift them out of the area, the South Vietnamese team member who had been unaccounted for after the initial encounter with the enemy appeared in the landing zone. Specialist *Kedenburg* unhesitatingly gave up his place in the sling to the man and directed the helicopter pilot to leave the area. He then continued to engage the enemy who were swarming into the landing zone, killing six enemy soldiers before he was overpowered. Specialist *Kedenburg*'s inspiring leadership, consummate courage and willing self-sacrifice permitted his small team to inflict heavy casualties on the enemy and escape almost certain annihilation. His actions reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Army.

GO 17

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.

Distribution:

To be distributed in accordance with DA Form 12–4 requirements.