GENERAL ORDERS
No. 8

HEADQUARTERS
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON DC, *9 March 1971*

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 First Class *William M. Bryant*, , assigned to Company A, 5th Special Forces Group, 1st Special Forces, who distinguished himself on 24 March 1969 while serving as Commanding Officer of Civilian Irregular Defense Group Company 321, 2d Battalion, 3rd Mobile Strike Force Command, during combat operations in Long Khanh Province, Republic of Vietnam. The battalion came under heavy fire and became surrounded by the elements of three enemy regiments. Sergeant *Bryant* displayed extraordinary heroism throughout the succeeding 34 hours of incessant attack as he moved throughout the company position heedless of the intense hostile fire while establishing and improving the defensive perimeter, directing fire during critical phases of the battle, distributing ammunition, assisting the wounded, and providing the leadership and inspirational example of courage to his men. When a helicopter drop of ammunition was made to resupply the beleaguered force, Sergeant *Bryant* with complete disregard for his own safety ran through the heavy enemy fire to retrieve the scattered ammunition boxes and distributed needed ammunition to his men. During a lull in the intense fighting, Sergeant *Bryant* led a patrol outside the perimeter to obtain information of the enemy. The patrol came under intense automatic weapons fire and was pinned down. Sergeant *Bryant* single-handedly repulsed one enemy attack on his small force and by his heroic action inspired his men to fight off other assaults. Seeing a wounded enemy soldier some distance from the patrol location, Sergeant *Bryant* crawled forward alone under heavy fire to retrieve the soldier for intelligence purposes. Finding that the enemy soldier had expired, Sergeant *Bryant* crawled back to his patrol and led his men back to the company position where he again took command of the defense. As the siege continued, Sergeant *Bryant* organized and led a patrol in a daring attempt to break through the enemy encirclement. The patrol had advanced some two hundred meters by heavy fighting when it was pinned down by the intense automatic weapons fire from heavily fortified bunkers and Sergeant *Bryant* was severely wounded. Despite his wounds he rallied his men, called for helicopter gunship support, and directed heavy suppressive fire upon the enemy positions. Following the last

gunship attack, Sergeant *Bryant* fearlessly charged an enemy automatic weapons position, overrunning it and single-handedly destroying its three defenders. Inspired by his heroic example, his men renewed their attack on the entrenched enemy. While regrouping his small force for the final assault against the enemy, Sergeant *Bryant* fell mortally wounded by an enemy rocket. Sergeant *Bryant*'s conspicuous gallantry, selfless concern for his comrades, and intrepidity at the cost of his own life above and beyond the call of duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

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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