GENERAL ORDERS
No. 17

HEADQUARTERS
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON, DC, *24 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 by the Department of the Army in the name of Congress to:

Staff Sergeant (then Private First Class) *Don J. Jenkins*, , Company A, 2d Battalion, 39th Infantry, 9th Infantry Division, who distinguished himself while serving as a machine gunner on a reconnaissance mission in Kien Phong Province, in the Republic of Vietnam, on 6 January 1969. When his company came under heavy crossfire from an enemy complex, Sergeant *Jenkins* unhesitatingly maneuvered forward to a perilously exposed position and began placing suppressive fire on the enemy. When his own machine gun jammed, he immediately obtained a rifle and continued to fire into the enemy bunkers until his machine gun was made operative by his assistant. He exposed himself to extremely heavy fire when he repeatedly both ran and crawled across open terrain to obtain resupplies of ammunition until he had exhausted all that was available for his machine gun. Displaying tremendous presence of mind, he then armed himself with two antitank weapons and, by himself, maneuvered through the hostile fusillade to within 20 meters of an enemy bunker to destroy that position. After moving back to the friendly defensive perimeter long enough to secure yet another weapon, a grenade launcher, Sergeant *Jenkins* moved forward to a position providing no protection and resumed placing accurate fire on the enemy until his ammunition was again exhausted. During this time he was seriously wounded by shrapnel. Undaunted and displaying great courage, he moved forward 100 meters to aid a friendly element that was pinned down only a few meters from the enemy. This he did with complete disregard for his own wound and despite having been advised that several previous rescue attempts had failed at the cost of the life of one and the wounding of others. Ignoring the continuing intense fire and his painful wounds, and hindered by darkness, he made three trips to the beleaguered unit, each time pulling a wounded comrade back to safety. Sergeant *Jenkins'* extraordinary valor, dedication, and indomitable spirit inspired his fellow soldiers to repulse the determined enemy attack and ultimately to defeat the larger force. His conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life reflect great credit upon him, his unit, 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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