GENERAL ORDERS
No. 37

HEADQUARTERS
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON, DC., *16 July 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:

Specialist Four *John P. Baca*, , United States Army, who distinguished himself on 10 February 1970 while serving on a recoilless rifle team with Company D, 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division during a night ambush mission in Phuoc Long Province in the Republic of Vietnam. A platoon from his company was sent to investigate the detonation of an automatic ambush device forward of his unit's main position and soon came under intense enemy fire from concealed positions along the trail. Hearing the heavy firing from the platoon position and realizing that his recoilless rifle team could assist the members of the besieged patrol, Specialist *Baca* led his team through the hail of enemy fire to a firing position within the patrol's defensive perimeter. As they prepared to engage the enemy, a fragmentation grenade was thrown into the midst of the patrol. Fully aware of the danger to his comrades, Specialist *Baca* unhesitatingly, and with complete disregard for his own safety, covered the grenade with his steel helmet and fell on it as the grenade exploded, thereby absorbing the lethal fragments and concussion with his body. His gallant action and total disregard for his own personal well-being directly saved eight men from certain serious injury or death. The extraordinary courage and selflessness displayed by Specialist *Baca*, at the risk of his life, are in the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit on him, his unit, and the United States Army. This award supersedes the Silver Star awarded to Specialist Four *Baca* for gallantry in action on 10 February 1970, as announced in United States Army Vietnam General Orders Number 7011, 1970.

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By Order of the Secretary of the Army:

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

Official:
VERNE L. BOWERS,
Major General, United States Army,
The Adjutant General.

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