GENERAL ORDERS
No. 39

HEADQUARTERS
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON, DC, *23 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:

Major (then Captain) *Kern W. Dunagan*, , Infantry, United States Army, who distinguished himself during the period 13 and 14 May 1969, while serving as Commanding Officer, Company A, 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry, Americal Division, in Quang Tin Province, Republic of Vietnam. On 13 May 1969, Major *Dunagan* was leading an attack to relieve pressure on the battalion's forward support base when his company came under intense fire from a well-entrenched enemy battalion. Despite continuous hostile fire from a numerically superior force, Major *Dunagan* repeatedly and fearlessly exposed himself in order to locate enemy positions, direct friendly supporting artillery, and position the men of his company. In the early evening while directing an element of his unit into perimeter guard, he was seriously wounded during an enemy mortar attack, but he refused to leave the battlefield and continued to supervise the evacuation of dead and wounded and to lead his command in the difficult task of disengaging from an aggressive enemy. In spite of painful wounds and extreme fatigue, Major *Dunagan* risked heavy enemy fire on two occasions to rescue critically wounded men. He was again seriously wounded. Undaunted, he continued to display outstanding courage, professional competence, and leadership and successfully extricated his command from its untenable position on the evening of 14 May. Having maneuvered his command into contact with an adjacent friendly unit, he learned that a six-man party from his company was under fire and had not reached the new perimeter. Major *Dunagan* unhesitatingly went back and searched for his men. Finding one soldier critically wounded, Major *Dunagan*, ignoring his own wounds, lifted the man to his shoulders and carried him to the comparative safety of the friendly perimeter. Before permitting himself to be evacuated, he insured all of his wounded received emergency treatment and were removed from the area. Throughout the engagement, Major *Dunagan*'s actions gave great inspiration to his men and were directly responsible for saving the lives of many of his fellow soldiers. Major *Dunagan*'s conscipuous gallantry, extraordinary heroism and intrepidity,

above and beyond the call of duty, are in the highest traditions of the United States Army and reflect great credit on him, his unit, and the military service. This award supersedes the Silver Star awarded to Major *Dunagan* for gallantry in action on 13 May 1969, as announced in Headquarters, Americal Division General Orders Number 11448, 5 November 1969.

By the 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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