HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY Washington, DC, 6 September 1974

No. 34

AWARD OF THE MEDAL OF HONOR





Staff Sergeant John G. Gertsch,





, United States Army, Com-



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 (Posthumous) 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:

pany E, 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry, 101st Airborne Division, who distinguished himself during the period 15 to 19 July 1969 while serving as a platoon sergeant and platoon leader during combat operations in the A Shau Valley, Republic of Vietnam. During the initial phase of an operation to seize a strongly defended enemy position, Sergeant Gertsch's platoon leader was seriously wounded and lay exposed to intense enemy fire. Forsaking his own safety, without hesitation Sergeant Gertsch rushed to aid his fallen leader and dragged him to a sheltered position. He then assumed command of the heavily engaged platoon and led his men in a fierce counterattack that forced

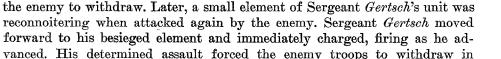
confusion and made possible the recovery of two wounded men who had been exposed to heavy enemy fire. Sometime later his platoon came under attack by an enemy force employing automatic weapons, grenade, and rocket fire. Sergeant Gertsch was severely wounded during the onslaught but continued to command his platoon despite his painful wound. While moving under fire



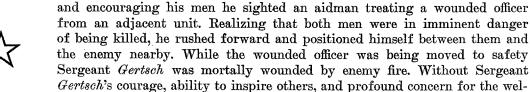


















him and the Armed Forces of his Country.



fare of his men, the loss of life among his fellow soldiers would have been significantly greater. His conspicuous gallantry, extraordinary heroism, and intrepidity at the cost of his life, above and beyond the call of duty, are in the highest traditions of the United States Army and reflect great credit on





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By Order of the Secretary of the Army:

FRED C. WEYAND General, United States Army Vice Chief of Staff

Official:

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

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