

The President of the United States in the name of the Congress takes pleasure in presenting the MEDAL OF HONOR to

MAJOR HOWARD V. LEE
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

for service as set forth in the following:

CITATION:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty as Commanding Officer, Company E, Fourth Marines, Third Marine Division near Cam Lo, Republic of Vietnam, on 8 and 9 August 1966. A platoon of Major (then Captain) Lee's company, while on an operation deep in enemy territory, was attacked and surrounded by a large Vietnamese force. Realizing that the unit had suffered numerous casualties, depriving it of effective leadership, and fully aware that the platoon was even then under heavy attack by the enemy, Major Lee took seven men and proceeded by helicopter to reinforce the beleaguered platoon. Major Lee disembarked from the helicopter with two of his men and, braving withering enemy fire, led them into the perimeter, where he fearlessly moved from position to position, directing and encouraging the overtaxed troops. The enemy then launched a massive attack with the full might of their forces. Although painfully wounded by fragments from an enemy grenade in several areas of his body, including his eye, Major Lee continued undauntedly throughout the night to direct the valiant defense, coordinate supporting fires, and apprise higher headquarters of the plight of the platoon. The next morning he collapsed from his wounds and was forced to relinquish command. However the small band of Marines had held their position and repeatedly fought off many vicious enemy attacks for a grueling six hours until their evacuation was effected the following morning. Major Lee's actions saved his men from capture, minimized the loss of lives, and dealt the enemy a severe defeat. His indomitable fighting spirit, superb leadership, and great personal valor in the face of tremendous odds, reflect great credit upon himself and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.