



Ralph Dias - Vietnam War - Ralph E. Dias was born July 15, 1950, in Shelocta, Pa. but spent much of his young life in Leetonia before going off to fight in the Vietnam War. He entered the Marine Corps in Pittsburgh and began his tour of duty on April 28, 1969. With enemy fire tearing up a group of trapped Marines, Dias flung himself against a machine gun bunker in the Que Son Mountains on Nov. 12, 1969. He charged across open ground but was wounded by snipers. Dias, 19, sought shelter behind a rock. Again, he exposed himself to fire, and again he was wounded. Determined to help his men, Dias crawled 50 feet to a spot from where he could lob grenades, but none met its mark. Dias again headed for the open, where he was shot yet once more. He tossed a last grenade. This time, his aim was true. Dias was killed by a final round of enemy fire, but he had destroyed the machine gun emplacement. Dias was posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor by then President Richard M. Nixon. Reprinted with permission of the Morning Journal/Buckeye Publishing Co.