

### DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF NAVAL RECORDS 2 NAVY ANNEX

WASHINGTON DC 20370-5100

BJG Docket No: 98-01 14 December 2001

From: Chairman, Board for Correction of Naval Records To: Secretary of the Navy

Subj: LTCCL REVIEW OF NAVAL RECORD

Ref: (a) Title 10 U.S.C. 1552

- Encl: (1) DD Form 149 dtd 5 Sep 00 w/attachments (binders 1 and 2)
  - (2) HQMC MMER/PERB memo dtd 29 Dec 00
  - (3) HQMC MMPR memo dtd 14 Feb 01
  - (4) HQMC MMOA-4 memo dtd 20 Feb 01
  - (5) Subject's ltr dtd 16 Apr 01
  - (6) HQMC MIFD memo dtd 30 May 01
  - (7) JSR memo for record dtd 7 Aug 01
  - (8) BJG memo for record dtd 7 Aug 01
  - (9) Subject's naval record

1. Pursuant to the provisions of reference (a), Subject, hereinafter referred to as Petitioner, filed written application, enclosure (1), with this Board requesting, in effect, that the applicable naval record be corrected by removing the fitness report for 1 July 1998 to 15 May 1999, documenting his relief for cause (RFC). A copy of this fitness report is at Tab A. He further requested removal of any other documentation of his RFC. He also requested removal of the command investigation report dated 11 June 1999. The Board did not consider this request, because this investigation report is not in his record. He further requested removal of his letter dated 9 December 1999 with 58 enclosures, a copy of which is at Petitioner's Tab E to enclosure (1), binder 2. He submitted this letter in opposition to filing in his record the command investigation report which, as indicated above, is not on file there. He also impliedly requested removal of correspondence dated 13 December 1999 and its enclosure dated 1 December 1999, copies of which are at Tab B, concerning revocation of his award of the Meritorious Service Medal (MSM). After he had submitted his application to this Board, he failed of selection before the Fiscal Year (FY) 2002 Colonel Selection Board. It is presumed he desires removal of that failure of selection, so that he will be considered by the next selection board convened to consider officers of his category for promotion to colonel as an officer who has not failed of selection to that grade. The FY 2003 Colonel Selection Board convened on 3 October 2001, but the results are not yet available.

2. The Board, consisting of Messrs. Frankfurt, Ivins, and Silberman, began their review of Petitioner's allegations of error and injustice on 8 August 2001. They concluded their deliberations on 23 October 2001. Pursuant to the Board's regulations, they determined that the corrective action indicated below should be taken on the available evidence of record. Documentary material considered by the Board consisted of the enclosures, naval records, and applicable statutes, regulations and policies.

3. The Board, having reviewed all the facts of record pertaining to Petitioner's allegations of error and injustice, finds as follows:

a. Before applying to this Board, Petitioner exhausted all administrative remedies which were available under existing law and regulations within the Department of the Navy.

b. Enclosure (1) was filed in a timely manner.

Petitioner, who was serving as commanding officer of a squadron in his current C. grade of lieutenant colonel, was the subject of an RFC, which was documented in the contested 40-page adverse fitness report for 1 July 1998 to 15 May 1999 (Tab A). He had been scheduled to relinquish command on 23 May 1999. The occasion of the fitness report is "DC" (directed by the Commandant of the Marine Corps). It was submitted on 24 June 1999. The reporting senior (RS) assigned Petitioner marks of "A," the lowest possible, in "performance," "courage," "leading subordinates," "developing subordinates," "setting the example," "decision making ability" and "judgment"; "B," the second lowest, in "proficiency," "effectiveness under stress," "ensuring well-being of subordinates" and "fulfillment of evaluation responsibilities"; "C," the third lowest, in "communication skills" and "professional military education"; and "D," the fourth lowest, in "initiative." The RS said Petitioner's RFC was "...due to improperly reporting the readiness of combat essential equipment and for creating/fostering an inappropriate command climate." The reviewing officer concurred with the RS, and he marked Petitioner "unsatisfactory," the lowest possible, in "comparative assessment." In his two rebuttals, Petitioner essentially denied improperly reporting combat essential equipment and creating a hostile command climate. He also stated that he had ordered his Marines to try to find the missing equipment, and that he did not want to report it missing unnecessarily.

d. On 11 June 1999, a command investigation (Petitioner's Tab D to enclosure (1), binder 1) was completed regarding the allegation that Petitioner had falsified equipment readiness reporting. The investigation also looked into an allegation that he had created an atmosphere of fear and intimidation. The investigation found that Petitioner had falsified equipment readiness reporting and that he had created a hostile command climate. The investigation is referred to and concurred with in Petitioner's contested fitness report, which ended on 15 May 1999, before the date on which the investigation was completed. On 9 December 1999, Petitioner submitted his rebuttal (Petitioner's Tab E to enclosure (1), binder 2) to the investigation. This rebuttal is one of the documents Petitioner wants removed from his naval record. As indicated above, the investigation to which this rebuttal

relates is not in his record. In this rebuttal, Petitioner denied falsifying equipment readiness reporting and creating a hostile command climate.

e. In the Board's view, the command investigation does not really show that Petitioner wrongly reported combat essential equipment; it does contain contradictory statements concerning the technical point that he should have deadlined the equipment; and it does not entirely support the allegation of a negative command climate.

f. Petitioner was awarded the MSM for his service from June 1997 through June 1999. Because of his RFC, the letter of 13 December 1999 with its enclosure of 1 December 1999 (Tab B) revoked the MSM. Both the MSM and the revocation correspondence are in Petitioner's naval record (documentation of the MSM appears twice, in its own right and as enclosures (12) and (26) of the command investigation rebuttal whose removal Petitioner has requested).

g. In his application, Petitioner argued that he was wrongly the subject of an RFC just 12 days before his scheduled change of command. He stated that he was relieved before a command investigation was completed, and before he had an opportunity to review the allegations against him, or submit a statement. He alleged that the investigation was the result of a request mast of a captain he had relieved a month before his scheduled change of command. He contended that he had counseled the captain on numerous occasions, and that the captain had previously requested mast, alleging that Petitioner had discriminated against him by relieving him. Petitioner stated that this complaint was investigated and found to be without merit; however, the captain stated that if Petitioner reinstated him in his billet, he would not reveal potentially embarrassing facts about Petitioner. Petitioner stated that when he refused to reinstate the captain, the captain requested mast again, and the command investigation was initiated into allegations that Petitioner had falsified essential combat equipment readiness and created a hostile command climate. Petitioner also argued that the investigating officer (IO) negatively influenced Petitioner's RS, and that the IO did not interview all witnesses with knowledge of the allegations. Finally, he asserted the reviewing officer did not fulfill his duty to adjudicate differences between himself and the RS.

h. Enclosure (2) is the report of the Headquarters Marine Corps (HQMC) Performance Evaluation Review Board (PERB) in Petitioner's case, reflecting their decision to deny his request to remove the contested fitness report. They found no merit in any of his contentions. Concerning the command climate issue, they stated that many of the allegations reflected in the investigation were also shown in the Marine Corps Comand Assessment Survey conducted before Petitioner's relief. They did not specifically address the readiness reporting issue, nor did they expressly acknowledge that Petitioner had submitted 58 supporting enclosures. They stated that many of the supporting statements were from individuals who were not present when Petitioner was relieved.

i. In correspondence at enclosures (3) and (4), both the HQMC Promotion Branch (MMPR) and Officer Assignment Branch, Personnel Management Division (MMOA-4) have

commented to the effect that if Petitioner's contested fitness report is removed, removal of his failure of selection by the FY 2002 Colonel Selection Board would be warranted.

j. Enclosure (5) is Petitioner's rebuttal to the unfavorable PERB report. He stated that the PERB focused only on the hostile command climate issue, and ignored the false essential combat equipment reporting allegation. He said that the PERB failed to mention the 58 supporting enclosures he had included with his original application. He also stated that the PERB said many of the statements he had provided were from individuals who were not present when he was relieved, when in fact, many of them were present. With his rebuttal, he furnished 24 new supporting statements. One of these, enclosure (1) to his rebuttal, was from a Marine Corps general officer who supported removing the contested fitness report. The general found it extraordinary that Petitioner had been relieved 12 days before his normal change of command, without having been counseled. The general said that this would be warranted only by the "...most egregious of incidents." He also noted that Petitioner had been recommended for an MSM by the same Marine Corps colonel who signed the contested adverse fitness report.

k. In correspondence attached as enclosure (6), the HQMC Manpower Management Information Systems Division (MIFD) has commented to the effect that Petitioner's rebuttal to the command investigation should be removed, as the investigation itself is not on file.

1. The memorandum for the record at enclosure (7) reflects that both the contested adverse fitness report and Petitioner's rebuttal to the command investigation were filed in his record before the convening of the FY 2002 Colonel Selection Board.

m. The memorandum for the record at enclosure (8) shows the staff of the HQMC PERB declined to permit the PERB to reconsider Petitioner's request to remove the contested fitness report, notwithstanding the new evidence he had presented with his rebuttal, at enclosure (5), to the PERB report.

### CONCLUSION:

Upon review and consideration of all the evidence of record, and notwithstanding the contents of the PERB report at enclosure (2), the Board finds the existence of an injustice warranting full relief.

The Board finds that the contested fitness report, which documents Petitioner's RFC, and any other reference to the RFC should be removed. In this connection, they find that the RFC was not warranted. They conclude that Petitioner makes a persuasive case, particularly in light of the supporting letter from the Marine Corps general enclosed with his rebuttal to the PERB report. They find it was reasonable for Petitioner to direct a search for the missing equipment and try to avoid ordering replacement equipment unnecessarily. As reflected in paragraph 3.e above, the Board does not consider the command investigation to be supportive of the allegations on which the RFC was based. Further, the Board believes Petitioner's

command acted prematurely by choosing to issue a "DC" fitness report for Petitioner with a reporting period ending before the pertinent command investigation report had been completed. In this regard, they suspect that the decision to generate a "DC" report with the unduly early ending date of 15 May 1999 may have influenced the IO's findings. Finally, they observe that the adverse fitness report does not jibe with Petitioner's recommendation for an MSM.

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In finding that Petitioner's rebuttal to the command investigation warrants removal, the Board agrees with the favorable advisory opinion at enclosure (6) from MIFD.

The Board finds that the correspondence concerning revocation of Petitioner's MSM should be removed as well, because it resulted from the RFC which the Board considers unjustified.

The Board agrees with the opinions from MMPR and MMOA-4, enclosures (3) and (4), in finding that Petitioner's failure of selection for promotion should be removed. They have no doubt that the contested adverse fitness report, whose removal they recommend, hurt his chances for selection. They further find that his letter in rebuttal to the command investigation, effectively revealing the contents of the investigation which was not on file in his record, would have further prejudiced his competitiveness for promotion.

In view of the above, the Board recommends the following corrective action:

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

a. That Petitioner's naval record be corrected by removing the following fitness report and related material, and any other reference to his relief for cause:

		Period	of	Report
Date of Report	Reporting Senior	From		To
24 Jun 99	Col USMC	1 Jul 98		15 May 99

b. That there be inserted in his naval record a memorandum in place of the removed report, containing appropriate identifying data concerning the report; that such memorandum state that the report has been removed by order of the Secretary of the Navy in accordance with the provisions of federal law and may not be made available to selection boards and other reviewing authorities; and that such boards may not conjecture or draw any inference as to the nature of the report.

c. That the magnetic tape maintained by Headquarters Marine Corps be corrected accordingly.

d. That Petitioner's naval record be corrected so that he will be considered by the earliest possible selection board convened to consider officers of his category for promotion to colonel as an officer who has not failed of selection for promotion to that grade.

e. That Petitioner's record be further corrected by removing his letter dated 9 December 1999, Subject: Forwarding of Investigation for Inclusion in OMPF (Official Military Personnel File), with 58 enclosures (OMPF microfiche 3, frames C3 through G14, microfiche 4, frames A3 through G14, and microfiche 5, frames A3 through A8).

f. That Petitioner's record be further corrected by removing the correspondence dated 13 December 1999 concerning revocation of his MSM, together with its enclosure dated 1 December 1999 (OMPF microfiche 3, frames C1 and C2).

g. That any material or entries inconsistent with or relating to the Board's recommendation be corrected, removed or completely expunged from Petitioner's record and that no such entries or material be added to the record in the future.

h. That any material directed to be removed from Petitioner's naval record be returned to this Board, together with a copy of this Report of Proceedings, for retention in a confidential file maintained for such purpose, with no cross reference being made a part of Petitioner's naval record.

4. It is certified that a quorum was present at the Board's review and deliberations, and that the foregoing is a true and complete record of the Board's proceedings in the above entitled matter.

bonathan S. Rustin

ROBERT D. ZSALMAN Recorder

JONATHAN S. RUSKIN Acting Recorder

5. The foregoing report of the Board is submitted for your review and action.

W. DEAN PFE

Reviewed and approved:

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### DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS 3280 RUSSELL ROAD QUANTICO, VIRGINIA 22134-5103

IN REPLY REFER TO: 1610 MMER/PERB 2 9 DEC 2000

MEMORANDUM FOR THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF NAVAL RECORDS

- Subj: MARINE CORPS PERFORMANCE EVALUATION REVIEW BOARD (PERB) ADVISORY OPINION ON BCNR APPLICATION IN THE CASE OF LIEUTENANT COLO
- Ref: (a) LtCol. DD Form 149 of 5 Sep 00 (b) MCO PT610.7E

1. Per MCO 1610.11C, the Performance Evaluation Review Board, with three members present, met on 20 December 2000 to consider Lieutenant Colonel, petition contained in reference (a). Removal of the fitness report for the period 980701 to 990515 (DC) was requested. Reference (b) is the performance evaluation directive governing submission of the report.

2. The petitioner contends the following:

a. That the decision to relieve him was an abuse of discretion by the Reporting Senior because it was premature, unjust, and not based on substantial evidence.

b. That the fitness report issue and Command Investigation are substantively inaccurate and do not fairly and accurately reflect his performance.

c. That the Reporting Senior improperly used the Command Investigation in preparing the challenged fitness report. This, he alleges, was inappropriate since the investigation was completed after the close of the reporting period and contained allegations of conduct that occurred prior to the reporting period.

d. That forwarding the Command Investigation for inclusion in his Official Military Personnel File (OMPF) was improper because it circumvents and undermines the Performance Evaluation System (PES).

e. That forwarding the Command Investigation for inclusion in his OMPF was improper because he was no longer a member of the command.

f. That forwarding the Command Investigation for inclusion in his OMPF was done to retaliate against him for requesting a Subj: MARINE CORPS PERFORMANCE EVALUATION REVIEW BOARD (PERB) ADVISORY OPINION ON BCNR APPLICATION IN THE CASE OF LIEUTENANT COLONE 98-01

copy of the investigation and for exercising his right to rebut the adverse fitness report.

. g. That the fitness report fails to comply with reference (b) because the Reviewing Officer failed to adjudicate the report by resolving factual inconsistencies and disagreements.

To support his appeal, the petitioner furnishes two volumes of documentary evidence.

3. In its proceedings, the PERB concluded that the report is both administratively correct and procedurally complete as written and filed. The following is offered as relevant and is keyed to subparagraphs 2a through 2g above:

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The evidence clearly shows that a preponderance of a. personnel interviewed by the Investigating Officer (IO) believed the petitioner misrepresented the readiness of the command, micro-managed the battalion, and commanded by fear and It was not necessary for the Reporting Senior to intimidation. have a completed investigation before effecting the petitioner's relief. The Reporting Senior received periodic updates that led him to believe the allegations were valid. Having lost full faith and confidence in the petitioner, he was relieved. Ιt should be noted that many of the allegations substantiated in the investigation were also readily apparent and available in the Marine Corps Command Assessment Survey (MCCAS) conducted in MWCS-18 prior to the petitioner's relief. It is also clear that the Wing Commander lost faith in the petitioner and relieved him with the full concurrence of the III MEF Commander. The Board concludes the petitioner's allegations are unfounded.

b. The petitioner provides no substantial information to support his claim that the challenged fitness report and investigation are substantively inaccurate. It is obvious that he had an opinion which differs from those of the reporting officials. The preponderance of statements in the investigation supports the allegations. Many of the statements provided to support the petitioner are from personnel not present during the period of time resulting in the petitioner's relief. In fact, many of the commendatory instances discussed by the petitioner occurred prior to the reporting period during which he was relieved. The petitioner has not provided any proof that the challenged fitness report and investigation are substantively

2

Subj: MARINE CORPS PERFORMANCE EVALUATION REVIEW BOARD (PERB) ADVISORY OPINION ON BCNR APPLICATION IN THE CASE OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL 98-01

inaccurate or do not fairly and accurately reflect his performance of duty.

. c. Even in a light most favorable to the petitioner, such use would not be contrary to law or regulation, and presents no error or irregularity prejudicial to the rights of the petitioner. The command climate issues could be deduced from the MCCAS survey results. The petitioner's accusations are speculative.

d. While not a PERB issue, paragraph 1000 of Marine Corps Order P1070.12J directs commanders to include in an officer's OMPF matters that bear or reflect on the character, performance, professional qualifications, and fitness of the officer. The command investigation provides this reflection and adds depth to the rationale underlying the petitioner's relief.

e. Simply stated, law and regulation does not limit OMPF submissions to the petitioner's current commander. Further review of Marine Corps Order P1070.12J (subparagraph 1000.1b) specifically states: "This folder contains documents...and other material reflecting significant personal achievement or adversity that is pertinent to making decisions for purposes of selection, assignment, and retention."

f. Nothing in the two volumes of documentation furnished with reference (a) supports his allegations. The Reporting Senior did not recommend inclusion of the investigation in the petitioner's OMPF. That was done by the Reviewing Officer. Included in the two volumes are e-mail transmissions where the petitioner requested copies of the investigation from Major General as well as the General's response. There is no indication of malice or revenge in any correspondence. In fact, the petitioner apparently received everything he asked for concerning copies of the investigation and time extensions to complete his rebuttals.

g. The petitioner was given ample time to prepare and submit his rebuttal statements (he received two extensions). The rebuttal was adjudicated by Major General Because the General added additional adverse material, the petitioner was again afforded an opportunity to comment, which he did. Major General gain adjudicated the petitioner's concerns and then forwarded the report to this Headquarters.

3

Subj: MARINE CORPS PERFORMANCE EVALUATION REVIEW BOARD (PERB) ADVISORY OPINION ON BCNR APPLICATION IN THE CASE OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL USAC

4. The PERB observes that the decision to relieve an officer of command is one that is not made without justifiable cause and considerable thought. While such an action is most unfortunate, the fitness report at issue reflects just such a situation and should stand on its own merit.

5. The Board's opinion, based on deliberation and secret ballot vote, is that the contested fitness report should remain a part of Lieutenant Colone contested official military record.

6. The case is forwarded for final action.

MARKA MARKANA

Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps Deputy Director Personnel Management Division Manpower and Reserve Affairs Department By direction of the Commandant of the Marine Corps 98-01



### DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS MANPOWER AND RESERVE AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT HARRY LEE HALL, 17 LEJEUNE ROAD QUANTICO, VIRGINIA 22134-5104

114 PEPSY ADFER TO: MMPR 14 FEB 2001

## MEMORANDUM FOR THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF NAVAL RECORDS

Subj: BCNR APPLICATION IN THE CASE OF LIEUTENANT COLONN

Ref: (a) MMER Route Sheet of 23 Jan 2001

1. Reference (a) requested an advisory opinion in the case of Lieutenant Colone Lieutenant Colone 1980 requesting removal of his fitness report 980701 to 990515 and his failure of selection from the FY02 USMC Colonel Promotion Selection Board.

2. The following facts are germane to this case:

a. Lieutenant Colon**e Constant** was considered and not selected as an in zone officer on the FY02 USMC Colonel Promotion Selection Board, which convened

b. In his request to the Board for Correction of Naval Records (BCNR) he states that he identified the error in this report on 990515. The final addendum page to this report was completed on 991229. He requested relief from BCNR on 000905, just one month prior to the board and sixteen months after identifying the error.

3. Promotion Branch defers comment on the removal of the fitness report to the Performance Evaluation Review Board. If the fitness report is removed, Promotion Branch would recommend approving his request for the removal of the failure of selection.

4. The point of contact in this matter is Captain the state of the sta



Officer Promotion Section



### DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS 3280 RUSSELL ROAD QUANTICO, VIRGINIA 22134-5103

IN REPLY REFER TO: 1600 MMOA-4 20 Feb 01

MEMORANDUM FOR THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF NAVAL RECORDS

Subj: BCNR PETITION FOR LIEUTENANT COLONEL

Ref: (a) MMER Request for Advisory Opinion in the case of Lieutenant Compared Vision V

1. Recommend disapproval of Lieutenant Colonel implied request for removal of his failure of selection.

2. Per the reference, we reviewed Lieutenant Colone record and petition. Lieutenant Colone petitioned the Performance Evaluation Review Board (PERB) for removal of the Directed by the Commandant of the Marine Corps fitness report of 980701 to 990515. Subsequently, he failed selection on the FY02 USMC Colonel Selection Board. Lieutenant Colonel petition implies a request for removal of his failure of selection.

3. In our opinion, had the petitioned fitness report been removed, the competitiveness of the record would have been significantly improved. However, the unfavorable PERB action does not change the competitiveness of the record as it appeared before the Board and the record received a complete and fair evaluation by the Board. Therefore, we recommend disapproval of Lieutenant Colone implied request for removal of his failure of selection.

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Colonel, U. S. Marine Corps Head, Officer Assignment Branch Personnel Management Division

#### DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS 2 NAVY ANNEX WASHINGTON, DC 20380-1775

IN REPLY REFER TO: 1070 MIFD 30 MAY 2001

## MEMORANDUM FOR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF NAVAL RECORDS

# Subj: BCNR APPLICATION IN THE CASE OF LIEUTENANT

1. Lieutenant Colone **Least an application** and supporting documents concerning his request for the removal of the following documents from his official military personnel files (OMPF) has been reviewed:

a. Colonel investigative report 5830 mjf of 11 June 1999 and all endorsements thereto.

b. Lieutenant Colonel letter 5830 STM of 9 December 1999.

c. Any other documentation referencing the above listed documents or his relief for cause of 15 May 1999.

 MCO P1070.12J, Marine Corps Individual Records
Administration Manual (IRAM), sets forth guidance and provides information on the contents of the OMPF in use at Headquarters,
U. S. Marine Corps. Limitations exist regarding the types of documents authorized for inclusion in the OMPF.

3. The following comments/opinions are provided pertaining to Lieutenant Colonel.

a. The document listed in paragraph 1a is not authorized for inclusion in the OMPF per paragraph 1000.4 of the IRAM.

b. Lieutenant Colonel **Content** ter 5830 STM of 9 December 1999 (with 58 enclosures) is authorized for inclusion in the OMPF to contest, explain, or rebut correspondence containing adverse material. However, since the adverse material that these documents refer to is not on file, inclusion of this document in the OMPF is irrelevant.

c. Lieutenant Colonel Lieuten 5830 STM of 9 December 1999 (with 58 enclosures) is the only document listed in paragraph 1 on file in his OMPF. Subj: BCNR APPLICATION IN THE CASE OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL

d. Lieutenant Colone s claim that his OMPF is in error or contains an injustice is supported by paragraph 1000.4 of the IRAM.

4. In view of the above, it is recommended that the Board for the Correction of Naval Records approve the removal of Lieutenant Coloner (1999) (with 58 enclosures) from his OMPF.

5. Point of contact 15 m

Director Manpower Management Information Systems Division