



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF NAVAL RECORDS
2 NAVY ANNEX
WASHINGTON DC 20370-5100

TJR
Docket No: 7695-01
19 October 2001

Dear [redacted]

This is in reference to your application for correction of your naval record pursuant to the provisions of Title 10, United States Code, Section 1552.

A three-member panel of the Board for Correction of Naval Records, sitting in executive session, considered your application on 16 October 2001. Your allegations of error and injustice were reviewed in accordance with administrative regulations and procedures applicable to the proceedings of this Board. Documentary material considered by the Board consisted of your application, together with all material submitted in support thereof, your naval record, and applicable statutes, regulations, and policies.

After careful and conscientious consideration of the entire record, the Board found the evidence submitted was insufficient to establish the existence of probable material error or injustice.

The Board found you enlisted in the Navy on 23 June 1969 at the age of 22. Your record reflects that on 24 August 1970 you were convicted by special court-martial (SPCM) of a 75 day period of unauthorized absence (UA). You were sentenced to confinement at hard labor for two months, reduction to paygrade E-1, and a \$180 forfeiture of pay.

Your record also reflects that during the period from 20 October 1970 to 27 March 1973 you were UA on three occasions for 810 days, broke restriction, and were declared a deserter. It appears that you submitted a written request for an undesirable discharge in order to avoid trial by court-martial for the foregoing three periods of UA. Prior to submitting this request, you would have conferred with a qualified military lawyer and been advised of your rights and warned of the probable adverse consequences of accepting such a discharge. It further appears that your request was granted and your commanding officer was directed to issue you an other than honorable discharge by reason of the good of the service. As a result of this action, you

would have been spared the stigma of a court-martial conviction and the potential penalties of a punitive discharge and confinement at hard labor. The record clearly reflects that on 18 April 1973 you were discharged for the good of the service to avoid trial by court-martial.

The Board, in its review of your entire record and application, carefully considered all mitigating factors, such as your youth and immaturity, good post service conduct, and the Department of Labor Exemplary Rehabilitation Certificate. However, the Board found the evidence and materials submitted were not sufficient to warrant recharacterization of your discharge given the serious nature of your frequent and lengthy periods of UA, and your request for discharge to avoid trial for these offenses. The Board believed that considerable clemency was extended to you when your request for discharge to avoid trial by court-martial was approved since, by this action, you escaped the possibility of confinement at hard labor and a punitive discharge. Further, the Board concluded that you received the benefit of your bargain with the Navy when your request for discharge was granted and you should not be permitted to change it now. Accordingly, your application has been denied.

The names and votes of the members of the panel will be furnished upon request.

It is regretted that the circumstances of your case are such that favorable action cannot be taken. You are entitled to have the Board reconsider its decision upon submission of new and material evidence or other matter not previously considered by the Board. In this regard, it is important to keep in mind that a presumption of regularity attaches to all official records. Consequently, when applying for a correction of an official naval record, the burden is on the applicant to demonstrate the existence of probable material error or injustice.

Sincerely,

W. DEAN PFEIFFER
Executive Director