



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

SJN
Docket No: 05736-11
1 December 2011

[REDACTED]

This is in reference to your application for correction of your naval record pursuant to the provisions of title 10 of the 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 29 November 2011. 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.


You enlisted in the Marine Corps and began a period of active duty on 15 August 1967. The Board found that on 25 May 1970, you were convicted by special court-martial (SPCM) of two periods of unauthorized absence (UA) totaling 199 days. You were sentenced to confinement at hard labor, a forfeiture of pay, a reduction in paygrade, and a bad conduct discharge (BCD). On 1 June 1970, you began a period of UA that lasted 107 days, ending with your apprehension on 16 September 1970. While you were in a UA status, you were apprehended by civil authorities for theft of a motor vehicle, and on 18 July 1970, the convening authority suspended your reduction in paygrade and BCD for three months. On 1 December 1970, you were convicted by a second SPCM of 107 days of UA. You received a reduction in paygrade and a forfeiture of pay. On 18 January 1971, you began another period of UA that lasted 207 days, ending with your apprehension on 13 August 1971. On 8 November 1971, you submitted a written request for a good of the service discharge in order to avoid trial by court-martial for the 207 days of UA. Prior to submitting this request for discharge, you conferred with a

qualified military lawyer, were advised of your rights, and were warned of the probable adverse consequences of accepting such a discharge. Your request for discharge was granted and on 26 November 1971, you received an other than honorable discharge for the good of the service in lieu of trial by court-martial. As a result of this action, you were spared the stigma of a court-martial conviction and the potential penalties of a punitive discharge and confinement at hard labor.

The Board, in its review of your application, carefully weighed all potentially mitigating factors, such as your youth, record of service, service in Vietnam, post service medical issues, and contention of having Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) at the time of your misconduct. Nevertheless, the Board concluded these factors were not sufficient to warrant recharacterization of your discharge given your misconduct that resulted in two SPCM for periods of UA totaling over 10 months, charges being preferred to a court-martial for a period of UA totaling over six months, and request for discharge. The Board believed that considerable clemency was extended to you when your request for discharge was approved. The Board also concluded that you received the benefit of your bargain with the Marine Corps when your request for discharge was granted and should not be permitted to change it now. Concerning your contention that your post-service diagnosed PTSD contributed to your misconduct, there is no evidence in the record to support it, and you submitted no such evidence. 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