



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

TRG
Docket No: 7691-00
21 September 2001

[REDACTED]

Dear Mr. [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 18 September 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, and applicable statutes, regulations and policies. The Board also considered the advisory opinion from a Navy psychiatrist dated 10 June 2001, a copy of which is enclosed.

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

The Board was unable to obtain your service record and conducted its review based on the decisional document prepared by the Naval Discharge Review Board (NDRB) and your medical record.

You enlisted in the Navy on 17 June 1992 at age 18. You then served without incident for almost 22 months. On 4 April 1994 you were referred for a psychiatric evaluation because of your increasing risk-taking behavior. The subsequent evaluation states, in part, as follows:

... He reported intrusive thoughts of killing himself over the past few weeks. He experienced these thoughts only during activities such as driving around curves. The patient also noted that he had recently become more reckless, driving his car around curves at high speed in a potentially self-injurious way, although he denied any conscious intent to harm himself. While at home on leave, he asked his parents to drive him to the hospital because he was afraid he might harm himself if these reckless behaviors continued. He was scheduled

to report to his first duty station, the USS GEORGE WASHINGTON (CVN-73), the day of admission. ...

You were diagnosed with an unspecified personality disorder with passive-aggressive, dependent and immature traits. Expeditious administrative separation was recommended because the psychiatrist believed that you were a continuing risk to harm yourself or others.

Based on the diagnosed personality disorder, you were processed for an administrative discharge. In connection with this processing, you elected to waive your procedural rights and requested discharge. Subsequently, the discharge authority directed a general discharge and you were so discharged on 4 May 1994. At that time, you were not recommended for reenlistment and were assigned an RE-3G reenlistment code.

On 5 October 2000 the NDRB directed that the general discharge be recharacterized to an honorable discharge, which was the type of discharge warranted by your service record.

In support of your request for a change in the reenlistment code, you state that you were young and immature and found the nuclear power program very stressful. You believe that you have matured and desire to again serve in the military. In support of your application, you have submitted several character references which attest to the fact that you are a good citizen and employee. You have also submitted a psychiatric evaluation which concludes that you do not have a personality disorder and states, in part, as follows:

.... During stressful times in particular, he is prone to be somewhat self-critical, uncertain, and indecisive. ... The combination of (a) highly developed system of social supports with a reasonably low stress environment is a favorable prognostic sign for future adjustment.

(His) clinical profile is entirely within normal limits and reveals no elevations that should be considered to indicate the presence of clinical psychopathology.

(He) appeared to relate to this examiner in an honest and forthright manner. He appears to be a committed husband and employee, attends church regularly, and had no history of problems in the military prior to hospitalization.

He reports his experience in the Navy was generally a positive one. It appears that a combination of stressors at home (breakup with girlfriend and general homesickness) and in the field in the military (nuclear

technology) contributed to the symptoms displayed prior to his discharge. The "personality disorder" diagnosis given him in April 1994 did not appear to have been an accurate reflection of this individual's symptom picture. Further, with the benefit of hindsight one can utilize in the nearly six years since discharge, there is no significant evidence for the pervasive pattern of thinking and behavior necessary to support such a diagnosis.

In order to resolve the conflicting psychiatric evaluations, the Board obtained an advisory opinion from a Navy psychiatrist which states, in part, as follows:

.... Although the record doesn't indicate any history of prior emotional difficulties, a clear picture is painted of a young man who didn't want to be in the Navy and would do whatever he needed to do to get out.

.... In support of his request to the BCNR he provided letters testifying to his maturity and growth. A psychological assessment also revealed no diagnosis. Interestingly, it did reveal a possible tendency to not deal well with stressful situations. In a very well written letter he describes how he has matured and his regrets for his behavior while on active duty.

... It is my opinion that (he) has probably grown substantially since his discharge and this is evidenced by his ability to reflect in a mature way on his actions when he was younger.

Unfortunately, it is well known that personality traits tend to be stable over time. It is possible that if he were to be on active duty during a time of emotional strain, he may react in a similar way. His desire to repay the government is admirable, and there are many ways that he could do this. I do not think I can support his request for a change in the reenlistment code.

The Board is aware that a personality disorder may become manifest when an individual is under stress. Therefore, the Board believed that you have not conclusively established that you do not have a personality disorder and substantially concurs with the comments contained in the advisory opinion.

Regulations allow for the assignment of an RE-3G or an RE-4 reenlistment code when an individual is discharged due to a diagnosed personality disorder. Since you have the least restrictive reenlistment code authorized by regulations, the Board concluded that a change in the reenlistment code was not

warranted.

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

Enclosure

MEMORANDUM

Date: 10 JUN 01

From: Victor Stiebel, CDR, MC, USNR
To: Board for the Correction of Naval Records
Subj: APPLICATION FOR CORRECTION OF NAVAL RECORDS 1CO
FORMER [REDACTED]
Ref: (a) Chairman, BCNR, ltr AEG, Docket # 7691-00, dtd 07 MAY 00
Enc: (1) BCNR File
(2) Service Record
(3) Medical Record
(4) Civilian Psychiatric Record

1. Per your verbal request and in accordance with ref (a), I have reviewed enclosures (1) through (4).

2. Review of service record indicates an uneventful enlistment. He completed schools successfully and advanced on schedule. He was admitted to NNMC Bethesda on the day he first reported to his first duty station.

3. Review of the medical record is noteworthy for very few entries. His first real contact with medical was when he was admitted to NNMC Bethesda. Although the record doesn't indicate any history of prior emotional difficulties, a clear picture is painted of a young man who didn't want to be in the Navy and would do whatever he needed to do to get out.

4. Review of the BCNR record shows that this is his first appeal to the Board. He feels that his discharge should be upgraded to honorable and his re-enlistment code changed. He provides several letters in support of his request. His request for an upgrade in discharge status to honorable has already been granted.

In support of his request to the BCNR he provides letters testifying to his maturity and growth. A psychological assessment also revealed no diagnosis. Interestingly, it did reveal a possible tendency to not deal well with stressful situations. In a very well written letter he describes how he has matured and his regrets for his behavior while on active duty.

5. It is my opinion that [REDACTED] has probably grown substantially since his discharge and this is evidenced by his ability to reflect in a mature way on his actions when he was younger.

Unfortunately, it is well known that personality traits tend to be stable over time. It is possible that if he were to be on active duty during a time of emotional strain, he may react in a similar way. I agree with his being given an honorable discharge. His desire to repay the government is admirable, and there are many ways that he could do this. I do not think I can support his request for a change in re-enlistment code.

Respectfully Submitted,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
CDR MC USNR-R
Staff Psychiatrist