



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

TJR
Docket No: 3186-09
8 March 2010

[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 2 March 2010. The names and votes of the members of the panel will be furnished upon request. 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 on 20 September 1965 at age 18. You served without disciplinary incident until 15 April 1966, when you were convicted by special court-martial (SPCM) of two periods of unauthorized absence (UA) totalling 24 days. About four months later, on 12 August 1966, you were again convicted by SPCM of a 49 day period of UA.

During the period from 30 June to 3 October 1967 you received nonjudicial punishment (NJP) on four occasions for a three day period of UA, breaking restriction, failure to obey a lawful order, and absence from your appointed place of duty.

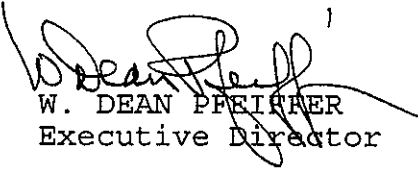
On 31 October 1968 you began another period of UA that was not terminated until 12 December 1968. During this period of UA you were also declared a deserter, however, only the charge of UA was referred for court-martial. On 8 and 22 January 1969 you submitted written requests for an other than honorable discharge in order to avoid trial by court-martial for the foregoing period of UA totalling 43 days. Prior to submitting these requests you

conferred with a qualified military lawyer at which time you were advised of your rights and warned of the probable adverse consequences of accepting such a discharge. Your requests were granted and the 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 were spared the stigma of a court-martial conviction and the potential penalties of a punitive discharge and confinement at hard labor. On 10 February 1969 you received your fifth NJP for breaking restriction. Nonetheless, on 12 February 1969, you were issued an other than honorable discharge.

The Board, in its review of your entire record and application carefully weighed all potentially mitigating factors, such as your youth and desire to upgrade the characterization of your discharge. It also considered your assertions that you were told that you would receive a general discharge and that you did nothing dishonorable. Nevertheless, the Board concluded these factors were not sufficient to warrant recharacterization of your discharge because of the seriousness of your frequent and lengthy periods of UA from the Marine Corps which resulted in several disciplinary actions and your request for discharge. The Board believed that considerable clemency was extended to you when your request for discharge to avoid trial by court-martial was approved. Further, the Board concluded that you received the benefit of your bargain with the Marine Corps when your request for discharge was granted and you should not be permitted to change it now. Further, there is no evidence in the record, and you submitted none to support your assertion. Accordingly, your application has been denied.

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