

MEMORANDUM
OF CALL

Previous editions usable

TO:

TOPO

☒ YOU WERE CALLED BY- ☐ YOU WERE VISITED BY-

Bobby Chan

OF (Organization)

Military Ofc

☒ PLEASE PHONE ► ☐ FTS ☐ AUTOVON

62150

☐ WILL CALL AGAIN ☐ IS WAITING TO SEE YOU

☐ RETURNED YOUR CALL ☐ WISHES AN APPOINTMENT

MESSAGE

nothing include
= P. 4/2/21 metal
= But press v. 21
= dissect case
not a strong one

RECEIVED BY

DATE

8-2

TIME

5:05

upgrade based on
revising facts -
by new inform'n
based on eye
witness accounts

Col.
Col.

Bobby Chunn
Jim Hawkins

August 1, 1996

P. not get involved
In 17 yrs. never saw it
setting precedent -
major prob. Pass-
making military
award

At DoD uncommon
but occasional

MEMORANDUM FOR TODD STERN

FROM: PHIL CAPLAN

SUBJECT: Rep. Frank Tejada

Rep. Tejada, who recently had brain surgery for cancer, is a decorated Vietnam veteran (Navy). It is my understanding that Rep. Ed Pastor and Rep. Bill Richardson are, on Tejada's behalf, trying to get Tejada a higher medal than the one he received after Vietnam.

My understanding is that this "upgrade" request was run through proper channels at DoD and a recommendation from a DoD committee was forwarded to Secretary Dalton for Tejada to receive the Silver Star. Tejada (or his backers) wants the Navy Cross - three steps higher.

Dalton has supposedly said that the only way for the committee's recommendation to be overruled is for the President to do so.

This first came up 2-3 weeks ago through Jen Palmieri (who got involved because the Members had been working on Janet Murghia). I checked it out with Clerks and Mil Office who said a President has never intervened in such an internal DoD decision and recommended very strongly against doing so in this instance.

It came up again yesterday when Leon talked to Rep. Pastor and agreed to meet with him - tomorrow at 2:30 pm. Pastor is going to deliver a letter to Leon requesting that Tejada get the medal he wants. Pastor knows that the President will likely not intervene and that the most Leon will do is pass the letter along to Dalton for his consideration.

Henry Cisneros said to me yesterday that he thought this outcome (i.e., the President not intervening) was probably fine, but that we should be sure to thoroughly consider the request.

Jen Palmieri is trying to get paper on this so that we can research it more fully. Clerks and Mil Office are on standby to help when we need.

cc: Jen Palmieri

6-2150

present
medal

Award of the Silver Star for CM Frank M. Tejeda

- On March 13, 1996, the CM initiated a visit with the Marine Corps House Liaison Officer to present evidence of his heroism while serving in Vietnam in 1966. While having already been awarded a Bronze Star and Purple Heart for other heroic actions and injuries, the CM had not been recognized for this particular firefight.
- The CM offered a written statement from a Mr. Hamilton who was the squad corpsman at the time.

Sergeant Tejeda was a squad leader in Company E, 2nd Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment (approximately 13 Marines and one sailor). While on patrol, the squad was caught in an ambush. Sergeant Tejeda returned fire covering his men while he directed them to safety. Upon reaching the safety of the tree line, Sergeant Tejeda realizing one of his men had been hit and was still in the rice paddy, returned to the injured Marine (the Marine had been KIA instantly) and carried his body to safety. Sometime during the course of the day, Sergeant Tejeda had been wounded in the leg and carried the dead Marine while so wounded.

- The written testimony of Mr. Hamilton and the name of the company executive officer were provided to the Awards Branch of Headquarters Marine Corps. The Marine Corps tracked down the executive officer for substantiation and received a written account from him which indicated he had knowledge of the event, but had not personally witnessed the actions of Sergeant Tejeda.
- On April 3, 1996, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Krulak, forwarded to the Secretary of the Navy a recommendation for the award of the Silver Star for CM Tejeda. The Silver Star is the third highest award for heroism. The Navy Cross and the Congressional Medal of Honor rank above it. In its deliberations on this recommendation, the Awards Branch could find no other substantiation other than Mr. Hamilton's and the executive officer's "second hand" knowledge. The Awards Branch also compared this action with other awards of both the Silver Star and the Navy Cross that had been awarded during the Vietnam conflict.
- The Secretary of the Navy approved the award of the Silver Star. The Marine Corps House Liaison Officer met with the CM and indicated the CM was disappointed with the award. A subsequent meeting between the House Liaison Officer, CM Tejeda and CM Ortiz resulted in Mr. Tejeda expressing again his disappointment that the award was not higher than a Silver Star.
- Again in June, the House Liaison Officer asked CM Tejeda if he would accept the Commandant's offer to have the Silver Star presented to him at an Evening Parade at 8th and I any Friday evening during the summer, in San Antonio, or at a Sunset Parade at the Iwo Jima War Memorial a Tuesday evening during the summer. In late July, the CMC sent a letter to CM Tejeda offering to present the award at an Evening Parade on August 30th. To date, the CM has not responded to the offer.
- The award recommendation was made under the provisions of section 522 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1996 which provided a one year time frame for which awards for heroism for actions during the Vietnam Conflict could be presented without regard to waivers otherwise required for timely submission of such awards.
- The award is being reviewed by the Navy Secretariat.

ORDER OF PRECEDENCE — U.S. NAVY



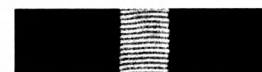
MEDAL OF HONOR



NAVY CROSS



DEFENSE
DISTINGUISHED
SERVICE MEDAL



DISTINGUISHED
SERVICE MEDAL



SILVER STAR



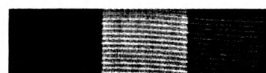
DEFENSE SUPERIOR
SERVICE MEDAL



LEGION OF MERIT



DISTINGUISHED FLYING
CROSS



NAVY AND MARINE
CORPS MEDAL



BRONZE STAR



PURPLE HEART



DEFENSE MERITORIOUS
SERVICE MEDAL



MERITORIOUS SERVICE
MEDAL



AIR MEDAL



JOINT SERVICE
COMMENDATION
MEDAL



NAVY COMMENDATION
MEDAL



JOINT SERVICE
ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL



NAVY ACHIEVEMENT
MEDAL



COMBAT ACTION
RIBBON



PRESIDENTIAL UNIT
CITATION



JOINT MERITORIOUS
UNIT AWARD



NAVY UNIT
COMMENDATION



MERITORIOUS UNIT
COMMENDATION



NAVY "E" RIBBON



POW MEDAL



GOOD CONDUCT
MEDAL



NAVAL RESERVE
MERITORIOUS SERVICE
MEDAL



FLEET MARINE FORCE
RIBBON



NAVY EXPEDITIONARY
MEDAL



CHINA SERVICE MEDAL



NAVY OCCUPATION
SERVICE MEDAL



NATIONAL DEFENSE
SERVICE MEDAL



KOREAN SERVICE MEDAL



ANTARCTICA SERVICE
MEDAL



ARMED FORCES
EXPEDITIONARY MEDAL



VIETNAM SERVICE
MEDAL



SOUTHWEST ASIA
SERVICE MEDAL



HUMANITARIAN
SERVICE MEDAL



SEA SERVICE
DEPLOYMENT RIBBON



NAVY ARCTIC SERVICE
RIBBON



NAVAL RESERVE SEA
SERVICE RIBBON



NAVY AND MARINE
CORPS OVERSEAS
SERVICE RIBBON

- Q: - What is S. Lee Star for?
- What is Navy Cross for?
 - What into was Rep. de submitted?



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

IN REPLY REFER TO:

1650

MHM-2

APR 3 1996

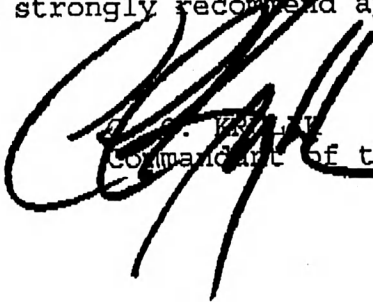
MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY

Subj: AWARD OF THE SILVER STAR MEDAL IN THE CASE OF MR. FRANK M. TEJEDA, JR., A FORMER MEMBER OF THE U.S. MARINE CORPS

Ref: (a) Subtitle C, Section 522, National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1996

Encl: (1) Personal Award Recommendation (OPNAV 1650/3) w/ encls

1. The reference provides for the processing of awards based upon valor in action in the Republic of Vietnam without regard to any time limits. The award in the case of Mr. Tejada is in this category and therefore no Congressional action, concerning waivers, is required.
2. The enclosure is submitted in support of the subject award. Mr. Tejada's official records have been reviewed which verify that he was wounded in action on 17 January 1966, but there is no documentation concerning any other personal awards for action on this date. The actions described are clearly heroic and, should have Mr. Tejada's actions had been recognized at the time, it is my strong belief that the award of the Silver Star Medal would have been approved. Therefore, I strongly recommend approval.


J. S. K. Kelly
Commandant of the Marine Corps

PERSONAL AWARD RECOMMENDATION
 OPNAV 1650/3 (Rev. 3-76) S/N 0107-LF-016-5015

FROM Mr. Thomas N. Best (Former Executive Officer, Co E, 2dBn, 9thMar)		TO (Awarding Authority) Secretary of the Navy	
1. SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER 450-72-5456		14. EXP. OF ACTIVE DUTY NA	
2. NAME (Last, first, middle) TEJEDA, Frank M., Jr.		15. EST. DETACHMENT DATE NA	
3. COMPONENT (USN, USNR, USMC, USAICR, etc.) USMC		16. NEW DUTY STATION (Home address if separation anticipated) None	
4. GRADE/RATE Sergeant	5. DESIG/NEC/ MOS 0331	17. UNIT AT TIME OF ACTION/SERVICE Co E, 2dBn, 9thMar	18. DUTY ASSIGNMENT Squad Leader
6. HOME STATE NA	7. BUIC/RUC (During Active Service) NA	19. PREVIOUS PERSONAL DECORATIONS AND PERIOD RECOGNIZED BV PH	
8. RECOMMENDED AWARD Silver Star Medal		9. COMBAT "V" ☐ YES ☐ NO	
10. ☒ HEROIC ☐ MERITORIOUS ☐ HEROIC POSTHUMOUS ☐ MERITORIOUS POSTHUMOUS ☐ MIA		20. PERSONAL AWARDS RECOMMENDED-NOT YET APPROVED None	
11. NUMBER OF AWARD OF THIS MEDAL First		21. OTHER PERSONNEL BEING RECOMMENDED FOR SAME ACTION None	
12. ACTION DATE/MERITORIOUS PERIOD 17 January 1966			
13. AREA OF ACTION/SERVICE Republic of Vietnam			

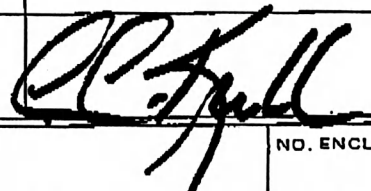
 22. I certify that the facts contained in the summary of action are ☒ known to me ☐ a matter of record

NAME, GRADE, TITLE OF ORIGINATOR Thomas N. Best, 1st Lt, USMC (Former XO, Co E, 2dBn, 9thMar)	SIGNATURE (See Statement)	DATE 21 MAR 96
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23. FORWARDING ENDORSEMENTS BY VIA ADDRESSEE(S). (Attach additional sheets only as necessary)

VIA	COMMAND (To be completed by originator)	RECOMMENDED AWARD	COMBAT "V"	SIGNATURE, GRADE	DATE FWD
1			☐ YES ☐ NO		
2			☐ YES ☐ NO		

24. TO BE COMPLETED BY AWARDING AUTHORITY

DISPOSITION OF BASIC RECOMMENDATION	COMBAT "V"	EXTRAORDINARY HEROISM RECOMMENDED	SIGNATURE, GRADE, TITLE	DATE
SSM	☐ YES ☐ NO	☐ YES ☐ NO		4.3.96

INFO COPIES TO

NO. ENCLOSURES ATTACHED

FOR USE OF NDBDM ONLY

 FROM: SECNAV (NDBDM)
 TO: CNO (OP-09B19) CMC (CODE MSDM)

DATE: _____

1. Reviewed and recorded. Forwarded for appropriate action.
2. Extraordinary heroism recommended ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable

By direction

The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the SILVER STAR MEDAL to

SERGEANT FRANK M. TEJEDA, JR.
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action while serving as Squad Leader, Company E, 2d Battalion, 9th Marines in connection with operations against insurgent communist (Viet Cong) forces in the Republic of Vietnam on 17 January 1966. During a patrol in the vicinity of Da-Nang, his squad came under heavy automatic and small arms fire. Sergeant Tejeda immediately engaged the enemy and provided covering fire for his squad as he directed them to a relatively safe wooded area. At this time, Sergeant Tejeda became aware that one of his Marines had been wounded and was laying in the open area of the rice paddies. He immediately raced across the fire swept area to recover the Marine who had, in fact, been killed in action. Totally disregarding his own safety and although painfully wounded in the leg, Sergeant Tejeda returned to the squad carrying his fallen comrade. His immediate actions in the face of overwhelming enemy fire were instrumental in saving the lives of his fellow Marines. Sergeant Tejeda's courageous acts were a testament to his loyalty, dedication, and professionalism. By his devotion to duty in the face of great personal danger, Sergeant Tejeda upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and of the United States Naval Service.

For the President,

Secretary of the Navy

**TRANSCRIPT OF FORMER HOSPITAL CORPSMAN HAMILTON'S LETTER OF
5 MAR 96 (ATTACHED)**

Dear Frank;

I'd like you to help me put the pieces together. I'm still trying to put the operation in order, concerning Jan 66? When Kovak got hit etc.

Hope you got my other letter. I know your busy and all that.

We went out on patrol and company stayed in the tree line area. We were heading across the rice paddies and they opened up on us.

Kovak got hit and I couldn't figure out what was going on. I heard corpsman up, I moved you said you guys move up and go toward tree line and hook up with company. I knew I couldn't do any thing for poor Kovak. Never forget him. I look around you have machine gunner covering us and your heading toward the village. Time to kick butt your were running ziz zag and firing. I see some people at a distance and then you came back and carried and dragged Kovak to rear area. I didn't ask if you had some kills cause it was a little quiet and then they opened up again as they always did when we tried to pick our dead and wounded. I believe you telling us to get out of the area and move to the tree line. Saved my butt as well as saving all our hides. Frank I need to verbalize this and give some credit. Again thank you and do let me know if I left any thing out.

Thanks Buds

Rick "Doc"

MAR 05 '96 17:35 SNYDERS

102-225-1641

P.2

3596

Dear Frank-

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Kouak got hit and I couldn't figure out what was going on. I heard Corporal up, I moved you said you guys move up and go toward tree line and hook up with Company. I knew I couldn't do anything for poor Kouak. Never forget him. I look

Around you have a machine gun covering us and your heading toward the village. Time to kick butt. You were running zig zag and firing. Saw some people at a distance and then you came back and carried and dragged Kouak to rear area. I didn't ask if you had some kills cause

MAR 25 '96 17:36 SNYDERS

it was a little quiet and then
they opened up again as they always
did when we tried to poke our
head + wounded. I believe you telling
us to get out of the area and move
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out.

Thanks/Bud-
Rick "DOC"

March 21, 199

To Whom it May Concern:

In late December, 1965, and early January 1966, I served as company executive officer of E/2/9. We were operating in I Corps just south of Danang.

During this time period, we conducted an early morning sweep operation in an area adjacent to Highway 1, which ran North and South. We were transported south by truck and then began our sweep just before dawn.

While holding the company for a break, a squad-size patrol was sent out to our left flank. The squad began to receive heavy fire from a group of Viet Cong and was pinned down while attempting to seek cover in a tree line.

One of the squad members, Lance Cpl David Kovac, was critically wounded in the attack. While I was personally engaged in providing fire support for the squad under attack, it is my understanding that the squad leader, Sgt. Frank Tejada, exposed himself to

Severe enemy fire while directing his
squad to cover and personally retrieving
his fellow comrade, Lance Cpl Kovac.

Although he had received a shrapnel
wound earlier in the day, Sgt. Tjeda
continued to lead his squad in an
effective and exemplary manner thro
the remainder of the operation.

Respectfully Submit

Thomas N. Best
Thomas N. Best



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
HEADQUARTERS, FLEET MARINE FORCE, PACIFIC
P.O. SAN FRANCISCO, 96601

29 Nov 65

In the name of the President of the United States, the
Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific takes pleasure
in presenting the BRONZE STAR MEDAL to

SERGEANT FRANK MARIANO TEJEDA, JR. 2057784

UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

"For heroic achievement in connection with operations against the insurgent communist (Viet Cong) forces while serving with Company K, Third Battalion, Third Marines during Operation Starlite in the Republic of Vietnam. In the early morning hours of 18 August 1965, while moving to its assigned objective, Sergeant TEJEDA's platoon was taken under heavy enemy sniper fire. Fearlessly disregarding his own safety, Sergeant TEJEDA led his squad in a vigorous assault across seventy-five meters of open ground under steady fire directly through the enemy position. This action resulted in the killing of one Viet Cong and the capturing of two others along with their equipment. As a result of Sergeant TEJEDA's instantaneous reaction, personal courage, and effective leadership in the face of enemy fire, his platoon was able to continue on its assigned mission without casualties. Sergeant TEJEDA's initiative and courageous actions throughout were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

Sergeant TEJEDA is authorized to wear the Combat "V".

FOR THE PRESIDENT,

V. H. KRULAK
LIEUTENANT GENERAL, U. S. MARINE CORPS
COMMANDING

TEMPORARY CITATION

Noted
Dec & Med Branch
file on case

Citation filed in book

gll



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

IN REPLY REFER TO:

1650
MHM-2
APR 3 1996

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY

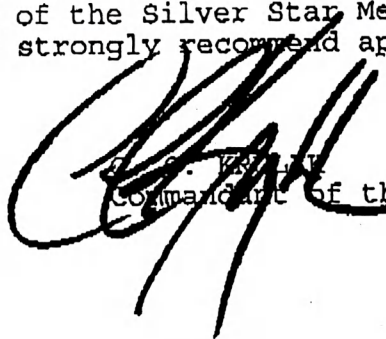
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Commandant of the Marine Corps

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2. NAME (Last, first, middle) TEJEDA, Frank M., Jr.			15. EST. DETACHMENT DATE NA		
3. COMPONENT (USN, USNR, USAIC, USAICR, etc.) USMC			16. NEW DUTY STATION (Home address if separation anticipated) None		
4. GRADE/RATE Sergeant	5. DESIG/NEC/ MOS 0331	17. UNIT AT TIME OF ACTION/SERVICE Co E, 2dBn, 9thMar		18. DUTY ASSIGNMENT Squad Leader	
6. HOME STATE NA	7. BUIC/RUC (During Active Service) NA		19. PREVIOUS PERSONAL DECORATIONS AND PERIOD RECOGNIZED BV PH		
8. RECOMMENDED AWARD Silver Star Medal		9. COMBAT "V" ☐ YES ☐ NO			
10. ☒ HEROIC ☐ MERIT TORMOUS ☐ HEROIC POSTHUMOUS ☐ MERITORIOUS POSTHUMOUS ☐ MIA			20. PERSONAL AWARDS RECOMMENDED-NOT YET APPROVED None		
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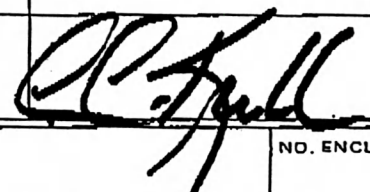
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SSM	☐ YES ☐ NO	☐ YES ☐ NO		4.3.96

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NO. ENCLOSURES ATTACHED

FOR USE OF NDBDM ONLY

FROM: SECNAV (NDBDM)
TO: CNO (OP-09B19) CMC (CODE MSDM)

DATE:

1. Reviewed and recorded. Forwarded for appropriate action.
2. Extraordinary heroism recommended ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable

By direction

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Severe enemy fire while directing his
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Although he had received a shrapnel
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Respectfully Submit

Thomas N. Best
Thomas N. Best



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
HEADQUARTERS, FLEET MARINE FORCE, PACIFIC
FPO, SAN FRANCISCO, 96601

29 Nov 65

In the name of the President of the United States, the
Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific takes pleas-
ure in presenting the BRONZE STAR MEDAL to

SERGEANT FRANK MARIANO TEJEDA, JR. 2057784

UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

for service as set forth in the following

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while serving with Company K, Third Battalion, Third Marines
during Operation Starlite in the Republic of Vietnam. In the
early morning hours of 18 August 1965, while moving to his
assigned objective, Sergeant TEJEDA's platoon was taken under
heavy enemy sniper fire. Fearlessly disregarding his own
safety, Sergeant TEJEDA led his squad in a vigorous assault
across seventy-five meters of open ground under steady fire
directly through the enemy position. This action resulted in
the killing of one Viet Cong and the capturing of 400 others
along with their equipment. As a result of Sergeant TEJEDA's
instantaneous reaction, personal courage, and successful leader-
ship in the face of enemy fire, his platoon was able to con-
tinue on its assigned mission without casualties. Sergeant
TEJEDA's initiative and courageous actions throughout were
in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States
Naval Service."

Sergeant TEJEDA is authorized to wear the Combat "V".

FOR THE PRESIDENT,

V. H. KRULAK
LIEUTENANT GENERAL, U. S. MARINE CORPS
COMMANDING

TEMPORARY CITATION

Noted
Dec & Med Branch
file on case

Citation filed in book

WATMO

8.2

Allen Sullivan
Tom Hupling
Toby Chance

Process

— Route to SecDef for appr. act-

Fy 96 ^{and} continued review (or not require
Warren)

may want to seek event 30 yrs after
typically 10 weeks

standard of proof high after fact
of witnesses

Here: (1) Best didn't observe
+ (2) Hamilton

Brown - most who are in combat
Rare soldier

very times very rare changing
machine gun roots etc John Vayner
~~that~~ many problems
this would be laughed out of court

Process

— P. only involved in model of TV
+ that in 2000 rec.
if P involved here, signal of
political mil. cracks

Thus already off on that Kennell
is recommended

only consider a grant if
a grant board if new sv.
not before board

lets ^{would} go every be in every mil. paper
etc.