



THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, DC 20301

AUG - 2 2021

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

SUBJECT: Service Cross Reviews for African American and Native American War Veterans

It has come to my attention that African American and Native American Service Cross recipients, unlike their Asian American, Native American Pacific Islander, Jewish American, and Hispanic American counterparts, did not receive the same opportunities to have their valorous actions reviewed for possible upgrade to the Medal of Honor. To correct this oversight, I direct the Secretaries of the Military Departments to conduct the following Service Cross (Distinguished Service Cross – Army; Navy Cross – Navy and Marine Corps; Air Force Cross – Air Force) reviews to determine if such Veterans' actions warrant award of the Medal of Honor:

- African American Veterans: Review Service Crosses awarded to such Veterans for valorous actions performed during the Korean and Vietnam Wars. (Note: The Departments of the Army and Navy already performed reviews for said World War II Veterans.)
- Native American Veterans: Review Service Crosses awarded to such Veterans for valorous actions performed during World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War.

To facilitate any award upgrades resulting from these reviews, I waive the requirement in DoD Manual 1348.33, Volume 1, "Manual of Military Decorations and Awards: Medal of Honor," that a previously adjudicated nomination may only be reconsidered if new, substantive, and material information is provided to justify an upgrade.

Complete your reviews and endorse any resulting Medal of Honor nominations to me in no later than 5 years. Given the breadth and scope of these reviews, 5 years should provide adequate time to complete a methodical and professional review. The resulting Medal of Honor nominations shall include draft congressional waiver language for the statutory time limits on awarding the Medal of Honor found in 10 U.S.C. §§ 7274, 8298, and 9274 where appropriate and necessary. Until your reviews are complete, please provide semi-annual status updates, every October 1 and April 1, to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs.

My point of contact regarding this matter is Mr. Carl "Doug" Johnson, at (703) 697-4615 or carl.d.johnson3.civ@mail.mil.



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