

Read your Forrester article in CounterPunch with interest (forwarded to me today by a fellow former 1st Cav alum, now a journalist currently/still with military.com I believe).

Now, the rest (or some more) of that story

After drafting the bogus medal citation (just as you described under orders, after work hours, on a rush basis), the next sheet of paper into my manual typewriter that night was the "whistle blowing" letter I composed addressed, (as we then saw it) as the proper protest protocol, to Congressman Mendel Rivers, then head of the House's Armed Services subcommittee a copy of which (my idea) was also addressed blindly to the New York Times.

I spent more time on the factual recounting/protesting letter (so as to set forth both the circumstances of the order to process a fabricated award in our assessment, the captain and major who were our immediate superiors were either "going along to get along" with some higher level[s] who, in their turn, were assisting with career army officer "ticket punching" AND to [prudently/carefully] get across our outrage at the officer cadre "career-ist" arrogance and their implied disdain for those who EARNED the medals they got i.e., do what we could to enforce medals integrity) than the time spent on the fictional Forrester military medal citation.

The Times responded in the person of Gloria Emerson, a more than dedicated reporter, and a generous advocate for the underdog (Bryant Jordan, address above, continued to be in contact with her until her sad death).

Mendel did not. Never heard a word from him or his committee.

The remaining longstanding curiosity I've had on this long passed episode (substantially brought out in the details and light of your later-Forrester reporting) what were the REAL character attributes of this General? He was, after all just like us other soldiers, draftees or volunteers some mother's son, someone's husband/father/brother But his response to his "award"

He had to know it was fiction when he read it or it was read aloud to him But he "accepted" the medal. To my mind, that was the telling act no other explanations nor excuses need apply.

A man not worthy of either officer or gentleman recognition.

Thanks for the curiosity-satisfying revisit to a time when we were all much younger. And thanks, Bryant, for sending the web link.

Yours, sincerely, Jim Olstad

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