NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION
May 10-11, 2023
Indianapolis, Indiana

Resolution No. 6: Correction of Military Records
Origin: Resolution No. 14 (CA) 2022 National Convention
Submitted by: Internal Affairs Commission

WHEREAS, U.S. Navy sailors were unjustly punished in the 1940s because they were Black, at a time when institutional racism was worse, segregation was the norm and Blacks were disproportionately disciplined for infractions that arguably did not rise to the severity of their treatment or their punishment; and

WHEREAS, The two famous courts-martial of Black sailors were the "Port Chicago Fifty" for protesting unsafe ammunition handling practices after the deaths of 320 servicemen and the "Philadelphia Fifteen" for writing a letter to a newspaper describing shipboard abuse and discrimination; and

WHEREAS, The Fiscal Year 2020 National Defense Authorization Act specifically addressed the Port Chicago explosion and recommended the secretary of the Navy should recommend executive action in favor of the 49 sailors with general court-martial and the 207 remaining sailors with summary court-martial convictions; and

WHEREAS, The secretary of the Navy can sign a document that clears the "Port Chicago Fifty" and "Philadelphia Fifteen," under authority granted by title 10 USC 1552, wherein the secretary can "remove an injustice" from the record of a United States Navy sailor; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 10-11, 2023, That The American Legion urge the secretary of the Navy and the United States Congress to remove an injustice and exonerate the "Port Chicago Fifty" and "Philadelphia Fifteen" and upgrade their discharges to honorable.