

28 February 1979

Lawrence J. Passek
Sr. Editor
Office of Air Force History (AFCHO)
Washington, D.C. 20314

Dear Mr. Passek:

I would like to take advantage of our brief acquaintance at the 1977 American Historical Association meeting in Dallas, Texas, and ask a favor of you, if possible.

I am currently beginning a book-length work on the history of the Air Force defoliation units in Viet Nam. As a former member of the organization, I have a reasonably up-to-date list of many ex-members and have contacted some of the individuals concerning their personal experiences. I also have been assembling material that was published in the popular press and journals. Before going any further, however, I thought that you might be able to tell me if you are aware of any other scholarship on this, or related, subjects.

I have not started my research in the official records. That will be a task for this summer or fall, depending on my teaching load and class schedule. Therefore, if you have any suggestions as to material location or persons to contact, I would again appreciate your help. In particular, I would like to get an idea of any classification restrictions on the "Ranch Hand" records.

I have been lucky enough to gain the help of two outstanding scholars to direct my efforts. Professor Roger A. Beaumont has written numerous articles and several books on military topics,

including Army of the Raj and Elite Forces. Professor Arnold Kramer also has published extensively and has a new book on Axis prisoners-of-war in the United States coming out within the next sixty days. He is also one of the primary researchers in the German synthetic fuels and petroleum production documents which are stored here at Texas A&M. Hopefully, this experienced leadership will keep me from straying from the path of good scholarship. A tentative publisher will be the Texas A&M University Press.

I have not lost my interest in minorities in the military; the Osur book on Blacks in World War II that you sent me was very informative. However, my change from Southwest Texas State to Texas A&M has temporarily diverted my study from this area. I may return to the topic after the "Ranch Hand" project is finished.

I will be grateful for any assistance or suggestions you can give me. I hope to be able to thank you in person during a planned trip to Washington later this year.

Respectfully,

Paul F. Cecil