

ALLEN CATES

March 24, 2004

Mr. James D. Johnston
Executive Secretary
DoD Civilian /Military Service Review Board
SAF Personnel Council
1535 Command Dr., EE Wing, 3rd Fl.
Andrews AFB, MD 20762-7002

Dear Mr. Johnston:

I am enclosing a letter I wrote to Dr. Henry Kissinger and have included his response. Dr. Kissinger was very much a part of our operations, but I can't prove it. I was assigned to Special Project and had to sign a paper not to reveal the information that I received. Much of it, if not all, has been revealed already. Special project missions were secret because lives and the success of the mission depended upon that secrecy. Very often I was told we had to wait to act until "The Doctor" gave approval. That was how Henry Kissinger was referred to. He was a hands-on administrator and unless his personal approval was received we could not fly certain special project missions.

Initially his letter seems almost negative, though I suppose a certain amount of solace can be appreciated for the kudos. At first glance it appears he offers nothing to assist me with evidence to support my claim for AAM/Military support, but you have to look at my letter first, and if you read Dr. Kissinger's letter closely he really does say what I wanted him to say. Because if not, he would have refused to answer, or simply said he could not assist, or refuted my claim. Is that a stretch? I doubt of confirmation will happen. It may seem strange that those who know won't say explicitly and

seem to be satisfied to leave us in a vacuum. Listening to the news today about who knew what and when and all the finger pointing one can understand the reluctance of those in high office to speak candidly. I can see where it may be difficult for an historian to decide our fate because much of the evidence is circumstantial, not obscure, but definitely shrouded in a mist of secrecy. I hope they are able to read between the lines.

I believe his letter endorses my claim in the manner it is written and present it accordingly.

You once told me the military supporting Air America may not be the same as Air America supporting the military, and it was the latter that you were more interested in to determine eligibility.

I present this question using mathematical logic. If $(a + b)$ equals Veteran status eligibility, then would not $(b + a)$ equal the same? I believe it does and suggest this logic be considered while weighing the evidence.

This is probably the last letter I will send since the time is expired for evidence gathering. I sincerely appreciate you kind assistance the past year.

Yours truly,


Allen Cates

ALLEN CATES

February 3, 2004

Dr. Henry Kissinger

Kissinger Associates, Inc.
350 Park Avenue, 26th Floor
New York, NY 10022

Dear Dr. Kissinger:

I need your assistance with my application for Veteran status eligibility and respectfully asking you to either critique my argument and/or provide an endorsement to the Secretary of the Air Force in favor of the application.

I am a former employee of Air America, Inc. and past President of the Air America Association. This is their web site. <<http://www.air-america.org>> The quest for Veteran status was established during my tenure and the group application was filed in July of 2003. Its quite lengthy, but portions of the application can be seen at the Vietnam Virtual Reality web site held at Texas Tech University. The URL address is <<http://www.vietnam.ttu.edu/virtualarchive>> There you can access the search mode and type in my name to retrieve my collection. Then, you may scroll down to find the file listed as CAT/Air America Veterans Group Application for Active Service Determination and Veteran Status Eligibility. The application has been accepted for review and a notice placed in the Federal Register requesting evidence to support the claim.

The application is not self-serving. I was already a veteran before my employment with Air America, and I did not suffer any injuries while employed with them. However, others did not fare as well. Veteran status would allow former Air America employees who received job connected injuries that resulted in long term disabilities the ability to receive VA care and assistance that otherwise would not be available. The status would also be an honor to show that employees were more than malcontents, psychopaths and drug runners, which is how we have often been characterized.

Essentially, my argument is that the United States Government needed a quick acting; already trained air force that could perform a military function clandestinely in areas the U.S. Military could not enter due to political restraints.

Public law 95-202 and DoD Directive 1000.20 establishes criteria that allow certain civilian groups to obtain Veteran status if it can be proved the group supported U.S. Military troops. I claim that former employees of CAT/Air America, Inc. conducted operations in South East Asia that justifies eligibility in accordance with the spirit and intention of Congress under the stated public law.

I am including one of many, and the last letter to Mr. James D. Johnson that supports that claim. But Sir, these letters and arguments may not be enough. I have not received any assistance from our former employer other than the original letter from the CIA that is included in the application and tends to express approval. Perhaps one reason explaining their reluctance to supply evidence for support is the fact that most of the CIA employees today were children during the Vietnam War and they can't identify with it. I'm not asking for anything classified in nature, but a letter from a person who was in a position to know of our existence and what we were about may turn the tide. We have less than 60 days to present evidence. Air America was involved with every aspect of that war, including the evacuation of Saigon in 1975, but proving that claim is difficult. I am respectfully asking for consideration and assistance.

Yours truly,


Allen Cates

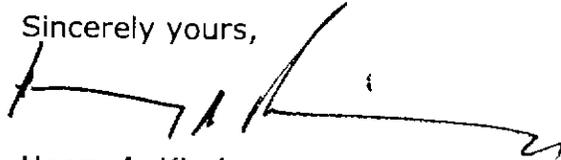
HENRY A. KISSINGER

March 16, 2004

Dear Mr. Cates:

I am sorry that I have been unable to reply to your letter more promptly, due to a trip abroad and other urgent matters. And I especially regret that I cannot help you to obtain Veteran Status Eligibility for employees of the former Air America. No one remembers better than I how much Air America aided our country with its valuable and often dangerous service in Southeast Asia, and I have the greatest respect for you and your colleagues. However I have always strictly kept to a policy of never interfering in the decisions of the Agencies responsible for making them. All that I am able to do, therefore, is to wish you all the best in your quest.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H. A. Kissinger', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Henry A. Kissinger

Mr. Allen Cates

FACSIMILE