

POW Whom White House Turned Away

Cincinnati

Army Specialist 4 Michael Branch, a former prisoner of war, was snubbed at the White House gala for former POWs Thursday night.

Branch was invited to the star-studded show and dinner on the White House lawn but originally rejected the invitation because of dental work he was undergoing at Fort Knox, Ky.

However, the dental work was completed sooner than expected so Branch flew to Washington Thursday.

He checked with White House representatives about the possibility of attending and he was turned down. Of 680 former POWs, Branch was the only one turned away. SEE SFC 30 MAY

WCPO-TV here talked to White House press aide Michael Schrauth, who said there was no room allotted for Branch and none could be arranged.

Branch has experienced other misfortunes.

While in Vietnam, he received a letter from his wife saying she had left him for another man. The letter upset Branch and he took it to a beach to read it again.

While on the beach, he was captured by a Viet Cong patrol, he said.

The army declared Branch AWOL because he had not taken his rifle with him and his superiors thought he went over the hill.

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