

Interview of L. Fletcher Prouty
September 24, 1996

Question Outline

Administration

- Give name and date; identify other persons in room.
- Request permission to tape interview.

Background Data

- Please give your full name and date of birth.
- What was your military service and rank?
- When did you retire? How many years of active service did you have?
- Please provide a summary of your military career.

(Follow up as necessary.)

Assassination

- What was your military assignment in November, 1963?
- How long had you been assigned to that position?
- What were your duties? Did you wear a uniform or civilian clothes?
- Who were your supervisors? What was the nature of your relationship with them?

(Expect him to name Krulak and Lansdale. At various points in his book Prouty refers to Lansdale by military rank, though at one [p. 276] he says Lansdale "actually worked for the CIA while serving in a cover assignment with the military." If he names Lansdale, ask him to clarify whether Lansdale was military or civilian.)

- Can you recall the names of any co-workers? What were their duties?
- Did your duties include briefing the CJCS, JCS, DCI or other important leaders? How many times? How often? What topics?
- Where was your office located?
- Describe your experiences at the time of the assassination. . .

Antarctica:

Why were you sent there?

How much notice were you given?
 Who sent you?
 Who filled in while you were away?
 Had you made other, similar trips to other places?
 Is so, how many times? When?
 Did you consider this trip unusual at the time? Why?

Antarctica, cont.

Do you recall anyone else who went on the trip?
 Why do you think this trip was connected to the assassination?
 Why was your absence significant?
 Do you have any records or documents that verify your story?
 Do you know where we could look for records that would verify your story?

New Zealand newspaper:

When/where did this incident occur?
 Did you keep the newspaper?
 Since the assassination, have you ever gotten a copy of that newspaper?
 Have you ever confirmed your recollections by contacting the newspaper to inquire about the source of its stories and the time of publication?

Lansdale:

You are alleged to have claimed that Edward Lansdale was in Dealey Plaza. Do you believe this to be true?
 What is the basis for this claim? *[If he mentions photograph, show photo and request identification.]*
 When did you first make this identification?
 Did you ever discuss this with Lansdale?
 Have you ever confirmed this in any other way?
 Do you know anyone who could confirm this, or any documents we might seek that would confirm this?

Conein:

Some researchers claim that you place former CIA agent Lucien Conein in Dallas. Do you believe that Conein was in Dallas, Texas?
[If yes] Have you ever contacted Conein to ask him about this?
 Have you ever confirmed this in any other way?
 Do you know anyone who could confirm this, or any documents we might seek that would confirm this?

Post-Assassination

- When did you return to Washington?
- Did you have any experiences following your return to Washington that you consider relevant to the assassination? (For example, did you hear any discussion in your office about unusual actions, etc.?)
- Did you ever talk to your supervisors or colleagues about the assassination? Do you recall any comments they made about the assassination?
- Did you ever talk to your supervisors or colleagues after the assassination about the peculiar timing of your trip to Antarctica?

Post-Assassination, cont.

112th/316th INTC: You have stated in writing that you contacted an individual in US Army intelligence in San Antonio after the assassination. The next questions deal with that contact:

Who was the person you contacted? *[Prompt with rosters. . .]*

How did you know this person?

When did this conversation take place?

Who initiated the call? Why?

To what military unit was that person assigned?

Describe, in as much detail as you can, the content of the conversation.

You have stated elsewhere that you still have notes from this conversation. Do you still have those notes? May we see them?

Did you ever talk to your contact person again after this event? Are you still in contact with him/her? Do you know where he/she can be located?

Did you ever contact Colonel Reich to confirm this story?

Are you aware of any statement that Colonel Reich has made about this story?

Did you ever confirm this story in any other way?

Do you know of any persons or documents that would verify your story?

In your book JFK: The CIA, Vietnam and the Plot to Assassinate John F. Kennedy, you allege that the instructions to this unit to stand down showed evidence of a conspiracy since this "skilled and experienced unit" would otherwise have routinely provided security for the President's visit to Dallas. Is this an accurate representation of your belief? Do you know whether the 112th/316th ever provided security for any other Presidential trip, before or after the assassination? [112th was responsible for five states. . .] Would you expect that similar units provided security for other trips (e.g. 113th INTC Group in Miami)?

Theories

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Military Protection: You have written that certain military units were specially trained to provide personal protection.

What units were those? What service(s)? (*Specific designation.*)

What was the nature of their training? Individual or unit? Where conducted?

What role did these units play in providing security to the President or Vice President?

What is the basis of your knowledge about this?

You have written that you had personally worked with such units in the past (i.e. prior to the assassination). When? Where? What units? What circumstances? Why was this part of your duties? Do you recall the names of anyone you worked with who was assigned to these units?

Have you ever confirmed any of this in any other way?

Do you know of any persons or documents that would verify this?

Secret Service Procedures: Your book is critical of the Secret Service's actions in Dallas, and you allege that certain actions violated USSS procedures.

How extensive is/was your knowledge of USSS procedures?

Had you ever worked with the USSS before on a security matter? When? Where? With whom? What circumstances?

What is the basis of your knowledge about USSS procedures?

Secret Service Procedures, cont.

Have you ever seen a manual, a textbook, a regulation, or any other operational publication used by the USSS? When? Where? What circumstances? Was it classified or unclassified?

Based on your personal knowledge and experience, how many USSS agents would you have expected to be providing security in Dallas? Do you know how many were actually there?

Do you know whether or not the USSS regularly sought the assistance of other agencies? If so, what agencies? What is the basis for your knowledge? Do you know what agencies were used in Dallas?

You have written that USSS agents in Ft. Worth were told they were not needed in Dallas. What is the basis for this statement? Have you ever confirmed this in any other way?

You have written that it violated USSS procedures to have the P and VP in the same motorcade. What is the basis for this statement? Why do you think this happened in Dallas? Who do you think arranged this? Who could/should have prevented this? Why do you think this is evidence of a conspiracy?

Other allegations:

· You have written that the Dallas motorcade route selected "violated security regulations." [p. 293] What regulations? Is it your understanding that these were truly "regulations," or were they merely "guidelines"? [*Prouty uses both terms in book.*] Is it your

understanding that these instructions, whatever they were, were otherwise always followed?

- You have written that sewers are supposed to be welded shut along the route of a presidential motorcade? Basis for this statement?

- You have written that “people with umbrellas, coats over their arms, and other items that could conceal a weapon are [to be] watched.” Basis for this statement?

- You have written that “the Secret Service and its trained military augmentation should have provided airtight protection all the way” [p293], and the failure to do this “tends to provide strong evidence of the work of the conspirators.” Have you ever found any confirmation from any source, other than your own reasoning, that some authority in fact instructed Secret Service agents to provide less security for the P in Dallas than was called for according to USSS standard procedures? Who do you think did this? Since no one has ever found direct evidence of this, is it your contention that all of the USSS agents and other involved in planning the P’s visit to Dallas -- plus their supervisors -- were either witting or unwitting parts of a conspiracy to kill the president?

- Who would have had the authority to direct the USSS to do this?

Other allegations. You have written that it was unprecedented for the Cabinet to travel together as they did on November 22, 1963.

Do you mean that this was literally unprecedented, or do you mean that this was simply unusual? What is the basis for this statement?

Why does this suggest a conspiracy?

Who would have had the authority to order them to travel together?

How did this affect events on November 22, 1963? How would events have gone differently if, for example, Cabinet members had been flying on different aircraft, or if more Cabinet officers had stayed in Washington?

Is it your belief that some among the Cabinet officers who remained in Washington were somehow involved or implicated in the alleged conspiracy?

- Your book asserts that a conspiracy to kill the President should be presumed from the various bits of circumstantial evidence you cite. Where do you think we could find documents to prove or disprove your hypothesis?

- Do you know any other persons with firsthand knowledge who might confirm or deny your hypotheses? [*Not researchers. . .*]

JFK Film

- Please describe the nature of the advice or expertise you provided to the makers of JFK.
- Both you and Oliver Stone have publicly acknowledged that the X character in the film played by

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donald Sutherland is based on you. Since this connection has been explicitly made, I think it important to distinguish where your personal knowledge, experiences and beliefs leave off and Mr. Stone's dramatic license begins. Or, put another way, we want to distinguish clearly where Fletcher Prouty leaves off and a purely fictional invention begins. For that reason, I'm going to go through the allegations made by the X character in the film. As I do, I'm going to ask you whether you consider yourself to have been the original source of that allegation, or whether to your knowledge that allegation actually originated with someone else.

[Read through X's allegations]

Questions: Do you believe this to be true?

If so, do you consider yourself to have been the original source of this allegation?

If not the original source, do you have independent knowledge as to the authenticity of this allegation?

Conclusion

- Do you have anything else you want to tell us that we haven't asked you about?
- Do you have in your possession any documents relevant to the assassination of President Kennedy? (By this I'm referring to original documents as opposed to books, articles or references.) Are you willing to provide these to the Archives?
- Do you know of anyone whose firsthand recollections could confirm your own views on the assassination?