INTERVIEW SUMMARY
ARRB Interview with L. Fletcher Prouty
September 24, 1996

On September 24, 1996, members of the ARRB staff interviewed L. Fletcher Prouty, an author and retired Air Force colonel, in the ARRB offices. Tim Wray was the lead questioner; also present were Jeremy Gunn, Christopher Barger, and Joan Zimmerman. The interview lasted approximately two hours and was recorded on audiocassettes. Prouty was cordial and cooperative, and the atmosphere was relaxed.

In his various writings, Mr. Prouty has advanced several claims or theories about the assassination of President Kennedy. In many cases he has asserted that his conclusions are based on special, firsthand knowledge that he gained through his own experiences as an Air Force officer assigned to duties in the Pentagon as military liaison for CIA clandestine operations from 1956 to 1964. According to Oliver Stone, Mr. Prouty and his claims are the basis for the anonymous "X" character played by Donald Sutherlund in Stone's film JFK.

The purposes of the ARRB interview with Prouty were:

(1) To determine precisely what firsthand knowledge Mr. Prouty has regarding the assassination;

(2) To determine the extent to which his various allegations or statements regarding the assassination are based on his own personal knowledge or experience;

(3) Should he disavow factual knowledge from his own experience, to determine whether he is aware of other factual data that could tend to prove or disprove his allegations;

(4) To ascertain whether Mr. Prouty has in his possession any original documents or other records that might be valuable to the JFK Assassination Records Collection at the National Archives;

(5) To seek Mr. Prouty's advice on where the ARRB might look for additional records relating to the assassination;

(6) To seek Mr. Prouty's advice on other individuals whom the ARRB might contact in order to confirm or deny his statements and theories.

Shown below and on succeeding pages is an issue-by-issue comparison of Prouty's allegations (including those previously made by him in writing, those attributed to him by the producers of the film JFK, and those that he spontaneously offered to the ARRB staff) together with whatever clarification, explanation, or amplification that he provided at the time of his ARRB interview on

September 24, 1996.

Note: All passages shown in italics are direct quotations taken from interview tape.

1. Antarctica Trip.

Background summary: Prouty was sent to Antarctica in November 1963 as the military escort for a group of VIP's. The assassination occurred while Prouty was out of the country. Prouty has previously asserted that he detected a CIA-inspired "cover story" in the early news accounts he saw of the assassination, including those in a special issue of the [Whatever Newspaper], which he claimed had to have been planted because wire service reports on the assassination could not have gone out quickly enough to be in place for the [Newspaper's] special edition. Prouty has theorized in writing that his trip to Antarctica may have had the sinister motive of getting him out of the way in Washington while plans went forward to assassinate President Kennedy. These allegations are repeated in the Oliver Stone film JFK.

Allegation 1: Trip to Antarctica may have had sinister connotations.

Previous statement:

. . . [T]his trip had nothing to do with my previous nine years of work, except that I had supported CIA activity in Antarctica over the years. . . . I have always wondered, deep in my own heart, whether that strange invitation that removed me so far from Washington and from the center of all things clandestine that I knew so well might have been connected to the events that followed. Were there things that I knew, or would have discovered, that made it wise to have me far from Washington. . . ?
[Source: L. Fletcher Prouty, JFK: The CIA, Vietnam and the Plot to Assassinate John F. Kennedy, Introduction by Oliver Stone (New York: Citadel Press, 1992), p. 284.]

Statements in ARRB Interview:

Trip to Antarctica was not unusual because Prouty had worked *"at least as far back as 1959 with the organization that works underneath the White House on Antarctic projects. . . . It was a duty I had to work Antarctica, of course not regularly, but when something came up."*
[Source: ARRB Prouty Interview, Tape 1, Side 1, 24:15]

Was trip sinister? *"Oh, no. I'd been working with them since 1959. It was so routine for them to call me, I didn't give it a second thought. . . . It's the military custom to put an escort officer on board."* [ARRB Prouty Interview, Tape 2, Side 1, 1:08]

"And even afterwards, when I heard people extrapolating in that sense—thinking that it wasn't my

job—they didn't know I'd already been working with Antarctica people since 1959." [ARRB Prouty Interview, Tape 2, Side 1, 1:52]

[See if we can insert some more stuff here where he responded in the negative to questions about whether he saw/heard anything suspicious after he returned from Antarctica.]

Allegation 2: [Newspaper story]