

Transcript of ARRB Interview with Edward J. Coyle
October 26, 1996

Interviewer: Timothy A. Wray

(NOTE: This interview was conducted at Mr. Coyle's residence and recorded on a microcassette audiotape. The tape machine used to record the interview was "voice activated"; consequently, occasional blurs or warbles occur on the tape whenever there was a long pause during the interview and the tape, having paused during the silence, starts up again. This is a verbatim transcript made from the microcassette.)

Q: The date is October 26, 1996. My name is Tim Wray; I'm a member of the staff for the Assassination Records Review Board, and I'm going to be interviewing Mr. Edward J. Coyle concerning his recollections about events related to the assassination of President Kennedy. Mr. Coyle, before we begin I just want to make sure that you understand that we're taping our conversation?

A: I do.

Q: Okay. I'm going to start with just some background questions. To begin with, would you just state for the record what is your full name?

A: My name is Edward J. Coyle.

Q: And what is your date of birth?

A: October 13, 1928.

Q: And could you just give me a summary of your military service?

A: Well, the last twelve years is probably what you. . . The last twelve years I was in military service I was in Army intelligence.

Q: When did you retire?

A: I retired in October of 1968.

Q: And what was your rank on retirement?

A: CWO 2.

Q: That's a Warrant Officer?

A: Warrant Officer.

Q: What was your, did you have a specialty when you were involved in military intelligence?

A: No, I was primarily concerned with counterintelligence. I was originally, I was in the Counterintelligence Corps. And then the military changed their titles of the various things and I became Army intelligence.

Q: Did you have any special training that you recall? Maybe it would be best if I asked you what was your training to perform military intelligence duties?

A: Well, I went through the basic investigator's course at Fort Holabird, Maryland, in November of 1956. I followed that up with a course in Defense Against Methods of Entry in 1958. And then I've had, well, my various assignments I worked in the field and in headquarters at various times.

Q: I think we should just make it clear for the record that before you became a Warrant Officer you were also assigned to some military intelligence duties when you were Enlisted, is that correct?

A: Yes. I was a, when I first went into military intelligence I was an E-5. And I was promoted to E-6 later on. And I was an E-6 until being promoted to Warrant Officer, and that was in 1963 -- some time in the early part of the summer of 1963.

Q: Do you recall when you were first assigned to the 112th Intelligence Corps Group?

A: I was assigned there on two different occasions. My first time was in 1957. And I was in, I think it was Region 3. I was in El Paso, Texas. And our area covered El Paso, New Mexico, and some other places like that. In that general area. But anyhow, I was there from 1957 until about July of 58, something like that. And then I went to the Army intelligence school, I went through that Defense Against Methods of Entry school, and then I went overseas. I went to Germany. And I was in Germany for three years, from September of 58 until about September of 61, and then again I was assigned to the 112th Intelligence Corps Group. And my original assignment with them when I came from Germany, I was a resident agent in a field office in Abilene, Texas. And I remained there until I was promoted to Warrant Officer. Once I was promoted to Warrant Officer, they transferred me to Dallas. And this happened in about either September or October of 1963.

Q: Do you recall who were the people that you worked with when you were in the Dallas office in 1963?

A: You know it's funny, I usually have pretty good. . . I remember one guy, my immediate boss was

a Lieutenant Steve Weiss. And the, our commanding officer at that time was Colonel Pate.

Q: Do you recall any other people that worked in the headquarters or that worked with you?

A: No, I do not. And that's unusual for me. I just don't have any -- that's a long time ago.

Q: I have a roster of people, that a little bit later on I'll show you the roster and maybe that will refresh your memory.

A: Okay.

Q: Do you recall how the Dallas office was organized? Did it have different sections inside the office, or. . . ?

A: Oh yeah, we had different sections inside the office. I worked in our, I think we called it the Security Section. And our section was responsible for monitoring the various Army units in the Dallas area, and making sure that they adhered to the rules and regulations governing security. And, you know, particularly the control of classified information and classified materials and stuff. Now, it may seem funny, but there were organizations in that area that were rather sensitive organizations. We had Nike missile sites in the Dallas area, and they were sensitive organizations. We provided our services to them. There were also some reserve organizations that were involved in security work and we provided our services to them. Then our office also took care of some special investigations.

Q: What would be an example of a special investigation?

A: Special investigation? We had, we were on very close terms with the Dallas Police Department, particularly their intelligence section. Now their intelligence section was run by an Army reserve colonel. I don't remember his name right now. But all of the men assigned to his organization were in Army intelligence. We ran background investigations on almost every police officer in the intelligence section of the Dallas Police Department.

Q: That's because they were. . . ?

A: Because they were working in Army intelligence, and there was a reserve organization.

Q: Let me just throw a name at you and see if you recognize this name in connection with that. Do you recognize the name of someone who might have been named Wittmayer or Whitmayer?

A: No.

Q: Okay. In addition to the duties in providing security to the military units, did you also have duties that required you to meet regularly or periodically or as your duties required with other agencies?

A: Yes. Our section was also responsible with maintaining liaison with all the law enforcement and military intelligence agencies in the area. In other words, if we wanted some information from the FBI, ONI, or anything like that, it would come to our section and we would go out and, you know, and get what we needed. By the same token, if we ran into information that we thought they should be aware of we also passed that information on. It was just kind of routine: you just stopped by maybe once a month or twice a month just to see how things were going and shoot the breeze with them, and just keep in touch with them.

Q: Okay, do you recall the names of any of the people that you had contact with?

A: The only name that I can recall that I had contact with was Lieutenant Jack Revill of the Dallas Police Department. And we became rather close friends.

Q: Do you recall what his position was?

A: He was the head of the intelligence section of the Dallas Police Department.

Q: Okay. Now, I know that you also know FBI agent Hosty. . .

A: Jim Hosty, yes.

Q: Was he one of the people that you had contact with?

A: Yes. Yes. I had occasion to get involved in an investigation that encompassed the FBI, the Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms division of the Treasury Department, and our own unit. You want me to go into that?

Q: Yes, why don't you just go ahead and tell the story. . .

A: I guess about two weeks or so before the President was assassinated, I received a lead, a request from our headquarters. Actually, our section received a request from our headquarters to do a local agency check on an individual from the Dallas area. Now, I don't even remember that individual's name, but I do remember the circumstances surrounding it -- only because it caused a lot of heartache on my part, to be very frank with you. I was asked to do a local agency check. And to us, a local

agency check without any specific, you know, any other requests, meant check the police department, the FBI, the sheriff's office. And that would be it unless there was, you know, something unusual about it. So I did this, and every -- I got a negative response from these people. I later found out that this individual was involved in a, I don't know how in the heck to put it -- in arms transactions. What had happened, this individual was a member of a group who contacted a captain who worked in an armory down at Fort Hood, Texas. And they requested that he obtain certain weapons for them. And what they were going to do with them, I have no idea. We surmised that they were going to be used for something else. But anyhow. . .

Q: When you say you surmised they were going to be used for something else, you mean. . .?

A: Cubans. Okay, we figured, at that particular time I didn't know anything. I later found out that all of them, all of this went on, when things blew up. When this captain was approached, he went to Army intelligence and he told them about this approach. And they decided that they would turn around and try and use this individual as a spy, let me put it that way, to gain as much information about this guy from Dallas that wanted to buy these weapons and what he was going to do with them.

They did not tell me this when they turn around and have me check out this man in the Dallas area, so henceforth I didn't go to other agencies that could have given me some more information. But anyhow, when I checked this man's name out, the FBI was also in on this clandestine operation. When I turned around and checked the FBI, they told me they had no knowledge of this man. That was reported to our headquarters. Shortly after that, about a week later or so, this guy, our prime suspect, was arrested for selling illegal arms to an ATF agent. So, in essence, what had happened was this. ATF busted this guy. We didn't want him busted, the FBI didn't want him busted. We wanted to find out what he was going to do with these various weapons that he was trying to buy up. But once ATF arrested him, that just blew the other operation apart. He was no longer of any value to us.

Q: The individual you're talking about, you say you don't recall his name. . .

A: No.

Q: Do you recall anything about him? What his job was, or where he lived, or anything like that?

A: No. I don't recall anything about him other than that.

Q: Okay.

A: I went. . . When the arrest by ATF blew up, blew this clandestine operation that was going on, I got angry. I was really mad. I was mad at my headquarters for not telling me what was going on.

I was mad at the FBI because they didn't tell me what was going on. And I was mad at ATF because they screwed everything up. So I decided that I would take it upon myself to have a meeting with our three agencies. And my sole purpose in asking that, for them to get together, was to find out what we could do to prevent any screw ups in the future. And that was my sole purpose of it. And the morning of the assassination. . . was it the 22d or the 23d?

Q: 22d.

A: On the morning of the 22d, a meeting did take place in the ATF office between Jim Hosty of the FBI, myself, and. . . Ellsworth, Frank Ellsworth from ATF. We sat down and we discussed this and, you know, words went back and forth. And just about, our meeting broke up just at the time that the motorcade was coming down Main Street, because when we left the ATF office there was only a -- all of our offices, ATF, the FBI, and our own office, the 112th office, were within walking distance of each other in this downtown area. And we walked, Jim Hosty and I, left the ATF office and we walked up the street and we got to the corner of Main and Rio Grande. And I looked up the street. We had to cross Main Street, and as I crossed Main Street I looked up the street and the motorcade, you could see the motorcade -- it was several blocks away, but it was headed in our direction. So I asked Jim Hosty if he was going to stop and see the President go by, and Jim said, No, he was busy and he had to go to the bank. And he took off.

And I sat there, I stood there on the corner and waited for the motorcade to come by. And as the President's vehicle, as the vehicles approached, the crowd got more and more -- when I first went down there, there was hardly anybody on our corner, but as the vehicles approached the crowd got bigger and bigger, and I was pushed down into the street. I was so close to the President's car that the tires almost ran over my feet. And if I had stuck my hand out, just stretched my arm out, I would have hit President Kennedy right in the head.

After the motorcade went by, I turned around and it was only half a block to our office. I walked up the street, entered the building, and was just going to go up in the elevator and my boss, Steve Weiss, came along, and we rode up to the 9th floor together. And he asked me if I had been to lunch, and I said No, I hadn't been, but I had to drop some things off in the office before I could go. And when we went upstairs the radio was playing, and we said Hi to some people in the office, and went about doing our business. We weren't there but just a minute or so.

And all of a sudden the radio went dead. I mean, there was no sound at all that came over the radio. We thought this was, you know, a little unusual, because it was just time for the noonday news. And it just went completely blank, and it was blank for maybe 30 seconds or more. And it was very noticeable, let me put it that way. A voice came over the radio, and the voice said "The President's been shot." And about the same time, our telephone rang in the office and Steve Weiss picked up the line. And the voice, the individual on the other end of that telephone conversation, told Steve Weiss that the President had been shot. And Steve liked to went berserk. I can remember that, because unbeknownst. . . The Colonel was in his office, Colonel Pate was in his

office, and he picked up his phone -- there were very few people in the entire office during that time, because it was lunchtime -- he picked up the phone, and he heard what the individual had said, and he told this individual: "You be damn sure." He says, "Look, you go out and you check with somebody else, and you be damn sure that the President has been shot before we pass this news on to our headquarters."

Q: Let me just ask a question here to clarify something. You say that someone called. Do you know who that person was, or. . .?

A: It was one of our agents, and he was in the School Book Depository Building. He told us where he was. He called. He went out and he checked, and he called back again, and it was only a very short period of time when he returned the phone call. And he said, "The President has been shot. Bring me a camera." And he wanted one of our cameras. Whether, why he wanted a camera, I have no idea, but he asked for one. So we got a camera out of the supply room, we loaded it with film, and then myself and I think it was Steve Weiss, we ran down to the School Book Depository Building. Now that was only about five blocks from where we were, but the sirens were going so bad at that time -- every police vehicle in the city was headed for the School Book Depository Building, and the traffic was just, you know, was just a mess down in that particular area. So we didn't get in a car, we just ran down there.

And when we got down to the School Book Depository Building, I could see our agent -- and I forget his name. He was at the front door. He was inside the building. The police had cordoned off the building: they would not let anybody in, and no one could get out. And they said that was going to be that way until Jack Revill from the Dallas Police Department got there -- he was in charge of the investigation of the people in that School Book Depository Building. But Jack was at the luncheon site where they were going to have the luncheon for the President, and they had to wait for him to come back to the School Book Depository Building. When Jack came back -- oh, while we were down there, Frank Ellsworth was there too, because I remember seeing him. When Jack Revill arrived at the building, I turn around, I knew Jack, and I told him, "Jack, one of our men is in that building." I said, "I'd like to get him out." He asked me which one it was and I pointed it out to him, and he had one of the police officers take down some information from him and he let him out of the building.

This was the, the area down there right at that time was actually used as the Dallas, as far as I could see, it was used as the Dallas Police Department's command post. Because they had turned up radios that were on the motorcycles that were in the area, and they had -- people were being issued orders and received orders right from that point down there as to where to go and what to do. So we just stood around there for the longest time listening to what was going on. And, if I am not mistaken, that was the first time that I heard Oswald's name mentioned, and that they had him in custody. We were down there for quite a while.

Q: How long would you estimate that? Was it a matter of minutes, or half an hour, or hours. . . ?

A: Oh no, no, no. I would say an hour, at least an hour, while we were down there.

Q: [Inaudible] Go ahead.

A: Then we went back to our office. And we had received requests from -- I don't know who the Colonel got them from -- but we were asked to go through our files. Before we knew that it was Oswald. We were asked to go through our intelligence files, and we had an index system up there, to see if we could come up with any known kooks in the area. They were looking for suspects, of any and all kinds. So we spent the rest of the afternoon doing that, even after it was announced that they had arrested Oswald, and we got him. We still continued that. I think I stayed, I was actually in the office until about midnight that night.

Q: And that was, just to let me clarify, that was in a general search for. . .

A: Just a general search for information, that's all.

Q: But I think I understood you to say that was not focused on Oswald. . .

A: No, no, it wasn't focused on Oswald. Oswald's name had never come up to me until it came up on television. I had no idea about him.

Q: Well, you said a minute ago that you thought that you'd heard Oswald's name mentioned when you were back at the School Book Depository. . . ?

A: I thought that I heard it mentioned then. But I mean, prior to that time, no. When we were back in the office, no. I know that we were in the office, while we were in the office -- in the afternoon, after it was determined that Oswald was a prime suspect, and that his wife was Russian -- they called our office and asked if we had any Russian linguists.

Q: Do you recall who called?

A: I believe it was the, if I'm not mistaken, it was the Secret Service.

Q: Did you take the call or did someone else take the call?

A: No, someone else took the call. Someone else took the call.

Q: Did you have a Russian linguist?

A: No, we did not have a Russian linguist. And that's how that -- there was a professor from Texas, from one of the universities out there, that was used as a linguist.

Q: Let me ask you this. Back while you were looking through the files: do you recall whether any information came in in either late afternoon, or evening, or any of the time while you were looking through the files, that did specifically request information about Oswald, or asked you to look if you had information on Oswald?

A: I don't believe we received any specific information to ask us to look in our files for Oswald. I don't recall. You know, after the name had come up and all that, we would have looked on our own to see if we had. And to my knowledge, we didn't have anything on him. Not in our office anyhow, not in that office there.

Q: Let me ask you this. Who kept the files? Was there one person or section? You said you were in the Security Section. Were you the people that kept the files? Or other people did it? Was there a File Section, or anything like that?

A: I don't believe that there was any File Section, no. The files were just there. Anyone who needed to use them, used them. Anyone who needed to put something in there, put it in there.

Q: Were these, maybe you could just tell me what the files looked like. Were they like card files, or were they like personnel folders or investigative folders or . . .

A: Some of them would have been investigative folders, okay? The file, the files that we went through on that particular day were little card files, three by five cards, with individual's names, with names and organizations on them.

Q: Let me just ask a couple specific things. Aside from the individual who was in the School Book Depository and made the call back to the headquarters, do you have any knowledge of, or recall ever having heard, that there were other members of the 112th that were in Dealey Plaza at the time of the assassination?

A: Not to my knowledge, no. I don't remember that. Now it's possible that there could have been. Okay, like I said, it was lunchtime and this and that. And besides, our agents were not, you know, we didn't punch a time clock and we weren't tied down to a desk. If you had something to do on the outside, you just went out and did it, and that was it.

Q: Do you recall ever having heard any conversation or discussion, before or after the assassination, about whether the 112th Dallas office was supposed to play any kind of role in helping to protect the

President?

A: The only time, the only thing that I can remember, was that after this happened, the colonel at one time, if I am not mistaken it was Colonel Pate, mentioned at one time that he was quite surprised that our unit was not asked to help with the security during the Presidential visit. Now, back at that time, the commanding officers of the various intelligence units in the area, they used to have a monthly meeting. And they would sit down to a luncheon or something and discuss what was going on. . .

Q: Let me just ask a question here. When you say "intelligence units," do you mean "military intelligence"? Or do you mean intelligence in a broad sense of kind of an investigative community, with the police, the FBI. . .

A: The investigative community, with the police, the FBI, ONI, OSI. And, in this particular case, the Secret Service. The Secret Service only gets involved, you know, when the President is in the area. But the Dallas Police Department were there. And the question, if I can recall properly, the question posed was did they need any help with the security of the, you know, of the President during his visit there? And the answer was No. The Secret Service and the Dallas Police Department said they had everything all cleared up. And as far as the colonel -- he wasn't asked to provide any help, and he said none of the other agencies were as far as he was concerned, including the FBI.

Q: This may be kind of a difficult thing for you to recollect, but do you recall whether Colonel Pate recounted this before the assassination or after the assassination? In other words, did he come back to the office from the meeting, you know, whenever it was before the assassination, and say, "Gee, they never, they haven't asked us to help with the security." Or was it after the assassination that he said something like, "You know, we had a meeting before the assassination at which they didn't ask us to help." I realize that's kind of a fine distinction after more than thirty years, but it's potentially important if you can recollect that.

A: I think it was before the assassination. I think he just made a comment about it one time. When he would go to these meetings, we would have office meetings and he would usually pass on what had transpired, you know, at the other meeting, things that he thought that we should know.

Q: Okay. The individual, the agent, that was at the School Book Depository, that you went down and talked with Revill and got him released -- you don't recall his name?

A: I don't recall, I did not recall his name.

Q: Do you recall what he looked like? Let me ask you this, was he in civilian clothes?

A: Yes he was.

Q: In civilian clothes. Do you recall what he was wearing at all?

A: No. No I don't. Someone refreshed my memory. And it was probably Powell. Jim Powell.

Q: Okay. Do you recognize the name of an officer, this was an individual who was assigned to the 112th's headquarters at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, named Colonel Robert Jones?

A: No.

Q: You don't recall ever having met him?

A: No.

Q: Another point, just like to make it clear for the record. Did you personally have any duties or responsibilities related to the President's, security for the President's trip to Dallas?

A: No.

Q: I'd just like to go over some more events surrounding the assassination. Do you have any recollection of a meeting that may have occurred a day or two before the day of the assassination, a meeting that you might have attended with FBI agent Hosty and Jack Revill? And, that at this meeting, Revill might have said something to the effect of -- in conversation with Hosty -- that Revill might have said something like, you know, being unhappy about not wanting to guard "that son of a bitch Kennedy tomorrow" or when he visits, or words to that effect?

A: No. No, nothing like that whatsoever. I don't recall, I don't recall Jack Revill ever making a reference of that kind to the President.

Q: Do you recall anything about Revill's views or political beliefs or anything like that? Would a statement like that be uncharacteristic or characteristic of him?

A: I think it would be uncharacteristic.

Q: Do you recall, after the -- either the day of the assassination or in succeeding days, whether you wrote any kind of a report about what you'd done on the day of the assassination?

A: You know, I don't recall writing any reports. I really don't. And yet this was so much a part of

our activities that I must have. I must have. I can recall an incident that took place, and it was the day of the assassination, where our office received a telephone call from 4th Army Headquarters, our unit down there. And they wanted to know what the word, if the words "Silver Dollar" had any meaning to us or any of the agencies in our area. And I was given the job of finding out what that meant. I went to the FBI. I got no response. I went to the Secret Service office in Dallas. I got no response from them. I don't know who told me, someone told me to check at a Nike missile site.

And I went out to one of the Nike missile sites, and I was taken to their "war room." And they had secret information, top secret information locked up in the safe. And I recall them opening that thing up -- they wanted to make sure I had the proper clearance to get this information. They knew what the words "Silver Dollar" meant.

Q: Do you recall what it meant?

A: Yes. It meant that Air Force Two was in the air. In other words, when something happened to the President of the United States and Air Force One was down, there were certain procedures that went into effect that put the people who would be in charge of the country in the air and safe, so that they could -- you know, there would be no assassination attempt on them. And when I found that out, and I said -- 4th Army headquarters should have known what that was.

Q: Okay. Let me ask a few questions, backing up now, to your investigation of the, perhaps we can call it the gunrunning investigation. Do you recall, aside from Ellsworth and Hosty, any other people either from the 112th or any other agencies that might have been involved in that investigation?

A: No I can't. I guess I should. . . Well, for some unknown reason, in the back of my mind there is the name "Nitro" or something similar to that. Now I'm not sure this was an investigating officer, or whether it was the name of that captain down at Fort Hood, you know, that was involved in this. But somehow that name kind of rings a bell with me. But outside of that, I don't remember anything.

Q: In the course of the investigation, did you ever have an occasion to visit Fort Hood and talk to anyone there about it?

A: No.

Q: Do you recognize the name of, I think this is an FBI agent, named Abernethy?

A: I don't recognize that name.

Q: Okay. Let me throw a couple of other names at you, and you can just tell me if you recognize any of these names. Someone named John Thomas Masen? His last name is spelled M-A-S-E-N?

A: No.

Q: Someone named George Nonte? His last name is spelled N-O-N-T-E?

A: That would have been the guy down in, at Fort Hood, I think. I said Nitro -- it could have been Nonte.

Q: Okay. Do you recognize the name of someone named Lawrence Reginald Miller?

A: No.

Q: How about Donnell Darius Whitter? His last name is W-H-I-T-T-E-R.

A: No.

Q: Okay. Do you recognize the name of someone named Edwin Walker?

A: Edwin Walker. Seems to me that he was a known personality in Dallas that was shot or was involved with the right wing in some way. At that particular time.

Q: My question, really what I'm asking is, do you recall his name being connected in any way with the investigation you were conducting?

A: No. No.

Q: You mentioned that you thought later that there might have been a connection with Cubans. Do you recall any names of Cubans, or any further information about that aspect?

A: No, I don't.

Q: Let me show you a document -- actually, it's a document with enclosures. And this document is called Report of Investigation - Military Police. It's dated 9 January 1964, and it's report number 4(43)-63-443, and it was prepared by the Office of the Provost Marshal at Fort Hood, Texas. I'm going to give you an opportunity to look through this, and see whether you recall ever having seen this document or any of its enclosures.

A: No, I do not recall ever having seen anything of this nature. No. I never saw anything like this. Somebody alleged that I did? No way.

Q: No. Or I'm not aware of that. The reason I showed you this is because this appears to be a document that may have been related to the same investigation that you were working on, about theft of weapons. . .

A: About theft of guns?

Q: Something like that.

A: Okay. No.

Q: Okay, let me ask you a few other sort of general questions. Were you ever interviewed by any investigators working for the Warren Commission?

A: No.

Q: In fact, let me back up. Were you ever interviewed by the FBI or the Secret Service or any law enforcement agencies after the assassination?

A: No.

Q: Do you recall ever having discussed the assassination, or the events surrounding the assassination, with Jim Hosty?

A: I could have.

Q: Do you recall having discussed it with any of your other acquaintances, either in the 112th or in the . . .

A: Oh, undoubtedly I did. Undoubtedly I did.

Q: Any clear recollections, or just sort of a general recollection?

A: No, just a general recollection.

Q: Do you, sort of in the vein of general recollections, do you recall anyone in the 112th indicating that the unit had failed to perform its duties or responsibilities somehow because the President had

been assassinated?

A: No.

Q: Do you recall anyone either saying or suggesting that perhaps the 112th did, or should have, a role in investigating the assassination?

A: No.

Q: Do you recall ever having been interviewed, or had any correspondence with, someone who is researching the assassination of President Kennedy, apart from myself and other people with the Assassination Review Board?

A: No.

Q: Following the assassination do you recall yourself, or anyone else in the 112th, to your knowledge, being given any kind of orders about keeping silent about some information or any aspect of the assassination?

A: No.

Q: Let me ask you now, beyond the assassination. I understand from your military record that after the assassination at some point you were transferred from the 112th to Korea.

A: Right.

Q: Do you recall what the circumstances of that were?

A: That was just merely routine. I was, it had been three years since I had been overseas, in fact it had been more than three years since I had been overseas and I guess I was just due for an assignment.

Q: Do you recall when you were assigned to Korea?

A: Yes.

Q: When was that?

A: I was assigned to, I was assigned to Korea in July. I was actually assigned to Korea in -- you mean when I was assigned to Korea or when I actually went over there?

Q: Well, let's say both.

A: I received the assignment sometime in the early part of 1964. Okay?

Q: When you say received the assignment, you mean you received notification?

A: I received notification that I was going to go over there. I know I took sixty days leave before I went, which was a little bit unusual. But I think I actually left Texas in May, and I got to Korea in July. Either July or the early part of August, because I know I came back from there in September of the following year.

Q: Did you regard the circumstances of this reassignment in any way unusual?

A: No. None whatsoever.

Q: Do you recall ever having speculated to anyone that the reason for your reassignment was because of your involvement in any respect with the assassination, or something you might have known about the assassination?

A: No. No. That would have been totally erroneous. I just did not, I did not know that at all. In fact, my transfer to Korea was a little funny. My boss, Steve Weiss, who was in the Dallas office, he got assigned to Korea. And he told me when he left there that he was going to put in a word for me.

Q: Do you recall. . . did he leave before you?

A: Yes, he left before me. And lo and behold, I got my assignment to Korea. And all the intelligence people who went to Korea, in that particular area I mean back there, they all went to the 502d, and they were all interviewed by the operations officer and he made further assignments. If you want to go to the 7th Army, you went; if you want to go to, you know, one of the Army intelligence units out in the area, you went; if you want to stay there, [unintelligible]. Steve Weiss was in the, I forget the name of it, but he was in the intelligence unit assigned to 7th Army. And when he found out that I was coming to Korea, and how he found out I have no idea, but he found out that I was coming to Korea and he went down and bugged this operations officer every week. He wanted me assigned to his unit. Because when I got there, I can remember the colonel: "Oh, you're Warrant Officer Coyle?" "Yes sir." He says, "Well, if you're half as good as this Lieutenant Weiss thinks you are up at 7th Army," he says, "I can't afford to let you leave this headquarters. You're working for me." That was unusual.

Q: Okay, let me show you a roster of names. And this is a roster of names taken from the 112th's unit history from 1962-63. And I'm going to show you the people assigned to Region 2, and just let you look over these names and see if there's any people on there that you recognize.

A: Oh yes. I remember Colonel Boyd. I remember Colonel Pate. I remember John Gee. And I remember Bob Greene, and Lightner and Weiss. These other guys, I'm not so sure about.

Q: Of the people that you mentioned there earlier, Pate was the commander. . .

A: Yes.

Q: Boyd, I would assume then, was sort of the deputy commander or . . .

A: You know, I'm not sure Boyd was there the entire time. I can remember Boyd being there with Frindell, because Boyd came out and paid a visit. I can remember taking him on a road trip with me. He came out to Abilene, Texas, and he surprised the hell out of me.

Q: This was earlier, when you were in the Abilene office?

A: Yeah, when I was in the Abilene office. Colonel Boyd came out, and I will never forget that man. We were driving down the highway and there was a car pulled off to the side of the road, and they were having problems. And he made me pull off to the side of the road. And he went up to them and asked the ladies if they needed any help. And we proceeded to change their tire for them -- they had a, their jack wouldn't even jack up their car. We had to get our jack out of our car and gerrymand it, you know, so it would work on theirs. He surprised the heck out of me. But him, I remember that. But I don't remember him -- I think he was even transferred before I got into Dallas, because I do not even remember him in the Dallas office. I remember Colonel Pate in there.

Q: Okay.

A: Okay, John Gee. He is a First Lieutenant.

Q: First Lieutenant Gee. Okay, do you recall what his position was, or what did he do?

A: He was in charge of something in there. He was one of these real gung ho guys. He wanted us to call him Sir and all of this -- we're running around in civilian clothes! And he's a captain, and he is a gung ho officer. He's one of these idiots that jumped out of airplanes. And we just have -- he was a paratrooper who was on, he was getting his taste of Army intelligence, the gist is an assignment

to fulfill his duties I guess, I don't know. But he was a character. Now Bob Greene was a nice guy. Bob Greene had a hell of a good voice, played the guitar. We had him out to our house for supper, I remember that. Steve Weiss? My association with Steve Weiss was confined to the office. I did not like him as a, I would not spend any social time with him, let me put it that way, because he did something that I would. . . He got married while we were there. The kids in the office, everyone in the office chipped in and bought him a wedding present, okay, including the enlisted personnel. He did not invite the enlisted personnel to his wedding. And I thought that was -- he accepted their gift, but he wouldn't invite them to his wedding, and I thought that was kind of chintzy.

Q: As you look at the list, do you recognize any of the others?

A: I'm trying to think. Jim Powell. Jim Powell's the guy was in the. . . I think Andricks was the new kid that worked in our office. I'm not sure, but I'm pretty sure that's true.

Q: Let me point out the two women's names over here, Donna Hanes and Hilda Schultz. . .

A: You know, I am a ladies' man from the word go. . .

Q: Do remember whether they were secretaries or. . .?

A: But I don't remember what the hell they looked like. None whatsoever. Region 2. I should know these guys. . .

Q: Well, if you don't have any recollections, I can leave you a copy of that list and maybe something will come to your mind later and you can let us know. In that vein, is there anything else about the assassination that perhaps I haven't asked you about that you think is important to be known, that you'd like to have an opportunity to comment on or say anything about?

A: Not really.

Q: Do have any notes or documents or anything yourself that you might have kept from that period of time?

A: No, I do not. In fact, I went through my papers and. . . The only thing that I have pertaining to my assignment in Dallas, Texas, is an old medical record that has my address: 2809 San Marcos, Dallas, Texas. That's it. I couldn't find anything else.

Q: Okay. I can't think of anything else. Let me Pause a moment here while I check my notes and make sure I haven't left anything out.

Q: Any additional things that you want to, any recollections that you have?

A: I have one, it's just a personal recollection. Oswald was shot on Sunday morning. An unusual thing about that is, I know of no police agency, I know of no security agency, who advertises when they are going to transfer a prisoner from one place to another. And yet Oswald's transfer, from the Dallas police department to the county sheriff's department, was well publicized. Date and time. They even had TV cameras there. My wife and I had taken the kids, we went to church, we came home from church. I turned the TV on, and it was the time for Oswald to be transferred. I turned the TV on, I walked out to the kitchen, I put some water on the stove to make some coffee, and I walked back in the other room and I said, "My God, Mary, they shot him!" I saw him get shot there, and I was sick, I was literally sick. Later on that day, I took my children down to Dealey Plaza just to let them see, you know, where the incident took place. And we were walking along down there, and there was a guy who was strolling by us and he had a walkie-talkie in his ear. And apparently there had been a news release that Oswald had died, and this guy very loudly said, "Oswald died. Yay! I hope the surgeon slipped with his scalpel." And I just stopped, and I looked at him and I said, "Why you sick son of a bitch." I said, "Now we'll never know what happened." Those were my comments, right then and there, that I made that day.

Q: As I was looking through my notes here I noticed one other item I wanted to ask about. Either yourself, or other members of the Dallas office, do you recall them being involved in I guess what we might call "domestic surveillance," that is, keeping track of civil rights activists or various other political radicals? Was that something that they did? Do you have any recollection of that?

A: Yes, we did that. I think it was standard operational procedure for every military unit in the area. We kept track of. . . We would gather any information of news that came our way. I don't know that we went out and actually did any investigation of these groups. But any information that we became aware of was reported to headquarters. Now let's face it: I don't know how many people know it, you know, but the general public does not know that in the event of a military takeover in the United States that the Army is in control? The Army is in control.

Q: You mean in the event of a declaration of martial law or something?

A: Martial law, the Army is in control. And the army commanders of the six Army areas in the United States, those army generals -- they're the ones that are responsible for everything. The FBI has no control over them. So as a consequence, any information that we became knowledgeable of -- yes, we kept records of that, and yes, we did turn it in. And we did make written reports.

(End of interview)

