

PAST STATEMENTS/ALLEGATIONS

1. ANTARCTICA

a.) Prouty went to Antarctica in November 1963 as the military escort for a group of VIP's. This assignment was out of the ordinary or unusual in some way. (Source: JFK by Oliver Stone)

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1. ANTARCTICA

a.) Prouty confirmed this trip. He escorted a group of scientists, businessmen, and Congressman Pete Abele (Ohio) to McMurdo station to observe a new power generator. This 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."ⁱ Prouty first learned of this trip in "August or September" from Gen. Lansdale.

Asked by Wray if he felt it was "sinister" that he had been sent to Antarctica: "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."ⁱⁱ

"And even afterwards, when I heard people extrapolating in that sense--thinking it wasn't my job-- they didn't know I'd already been working with Antarctica people since 1959."ⁱⁱⁱ

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2. THE 316TH/112TH INTC GROUP

a.) "I called a member of that army unit later. I was told that the commander "had offered the services of his unit for protection duties for the entire trip through Texas," that he was "point blank and categorically refused by the Secret Service," and that "there were hot words between the two agencies."^{iv}

b.) "I called a man who I knew was a member of the 112th Military Intelligence Group in the Fourth Army area at Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio, Texas."^v

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2. THE 316TH/112TH INTC GROUP

a.) In response to Wray asking Prouty when he had called the man: "It didn't work that way. He called me."^{vi}

b.) "We never dealt with that organization... I don't remember ever getting a call from Col. Reich. No way I would have known him."^{vii}

When asked if he knew the man with whom he spoke: "I was quite surprised... because it was when I had retired and left, and the chance of me having contact with people I'd never even worked with was rare."^{viii}

Asked directly, "Did you know this person?" : "I didn't know *anybody* in the unit."^{ix}

"The fact that this guy called me is almost an irrelevant issue."^x

"The man who called me was an individual. I didn't even know if he was on duty, and I'd never seen him."^{xi}

In informal conversation with Wray after conclusion of the interview: "You know, that

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c.) "I have kept the notes I made during that call and shall quote from them here."^{xii}

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guy didn't sound like he knew the business. I wonder if he was even genuine."

c.) Asked if he still has his notes: "Oh, I think they're long gone."^{xiii}

d.) "It 'knew Dallas was dangerous', the commander told *my associate* in explaining why he had decided to offer his services..."^{xiv}
(Emphasis added.)

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3. MILITARY/SECRET SERVICE LIAISON

a.) "I have worked with military presidential protection units."^{xv}

b.) "I had worked on what is called 'Presidential protection.'^{xvi}

d.) Note how Prouty repeatedly asserts that he *did not know* the man who called him.

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3. MILITARY/SECRET SERVICE LIAISON

a.) "Quite frankly, other than knowing [that] Presidential protection exists, that's about all I was required to know."^{xvii}

b.) "The only time I was personally involved-- and I think that was just for familiarization early in my assignment for this work-- was when I went to Mexico City [in 1955]... that was my first and last course with them, Mexico City."^{xviii}

[Mexico City] was the only one I ever went on... I flew the airplane to Mexico City for them."^{xix}

Asked if there were military protection units or personnel on this flight: "The only person I knew was a Secret Service man."^{xx}

In addition to these statements which relate directly to topics on which Prouty has written, he made several potentially explosive statements during the course of the interview. These statements, taken on their face, might sound significant, and he delivers them in a very authoritative manner at first, as if he both knows what he is talking about and knows from an insider's standpoint. However, under follow-up questioning, not only did the statements not hold up, but it appeared that in many cases, Prouty had no further basis for them than his own beliefs; in other words, the charges he makes on the tape are, in most cases by Prouty's own admission, undocumented and unsupported. Examples are listed below.

1 **Initial statement:** *"Lee Harvey Oswald was among the people taken from the Armed Forces to work for CIA in the program I headed... He was out at Atsugi, Japan; he had worked for us in the Indonesia campaign... I never met him, but I found that out from the records later."*^{xxi}

The significance of this statement, if true, is obvious. Understanding this, ARRB staff members attempted to draw out the facts upon which Prouty based it. Wray asked which specific program Prouty referred to; Prouty responded that it "was... support of military operations of CIA, clandestine operations."^{xxii} However, asked if he had seen Oswald's name before the assassination, Prouty responded, "No, no. We almost never saw names... **I never saw the Oswald records; I never looked for the Oswald records. I had retired after that.**"^{xxiii} (Emphasis added.) Next, Wray directly asked, "So, when you say 'Oswald was in this program', what's the basis for saying that?" Prouty's response (after a pause): "It was just general knowledge. It's come up lots of times. And since I recognize the program whenever I see it... he fit the pattern so perfectly, I would never doubt the stories I saw. I don't know whether it was the New York Times, [or] something like that, I don't know."^{xxiv} Wray continued to try and establish whether there was a factual basis for the allegation. "Oswald's involvement in the Indonesia campaign-- again, that comes from your interpretation of stories that you've heard?" Prouty answered, "Things that I've read. Things from various sources or people I've talked to."^{xxv} Barger then asked Prouty about specific program names and records; Prouty gave a detailed description of the process of destroying records from his office, but failed to give a program name or anything ARRB could try to verify.^{xxvi}

Analysis: Since Prouty could not and did not provide any substantiating evidence whatsoever, it

appears that this allegation is either fabricated or hypothesized.

2. **Initial statement:** *General Lansdale was in Dealey Plaza on the afternoon of the assassination, and can be seen in one of the “tramp” photos.*

Again, if this statement is true, it could be highly important. But when ARRB staff attempted to “press” Prouty on this point, he gave no information and made no suggestion as to how we could verify this allegation. Prouty also claimed that he sent the tramp photo to an acquaintance who also knew Lansdale, and that this person had corroborated the contention that the man in the photo is Lansdale. But when we asked if he would identify this person so that we could talk to him, Prouty responded, “No. No. That’s a personal matter.”^{xxvii}

Analysis: Prouty was given several opportunities to verify this allegation; since he did not do so, this allegation is at best unsupported.

3. **Initial statement:** *While discussing the trip he took to Mexico City in 1955 prior to a visit by President Eisenhower, Prouty referred to protective procedures used. At one point, he says, rather emphatically, “They have a book on what to do.”^{xxviii}*

This book, if it exists, would clearly be an assassination related document. Seeing this, Barger asked Prouty about the origin of the book; i.e., was it a military document, a Secret Service manual, or something else. Prouty responds with a lengthy discussion of his actions and those of the people he was working with, but his comments make clear that he is only speculating. “The guy once in a while referred to their manual.”^{xxix}

Analysis: Prouty gave no indication that he has ever seen such a manual or book, nor did he offer any suggestion as to how we could verify or check this manual. The allegation is unsupported.

4. **Initial statement:** *When discussing the existence of military units which have as their responsibility the protection of the president, Prouty asserts that such a unit was headquartered at Ft. Myer, Virginia.^{xxx} In addition, he at one point asserted, “These units are created for Presidential protection-- they were trained for Presidential protection.”^{xxxi}*

Asked if he knew the unit identification, either by name or number, Prouty said he did not. His only substantiation offered was a claim to have visited the unit in the course of duty at one point. But he did not know details of this unit's responsibilities. "This was a meeting, really, on another subject, in which this came up. [It was] sort of like, 'here's a function we have.' But I probably never went back to them again."^{xxxii} No evidence was offered to prove the existence of units specifically trained for Presidential protection.

Analysis: The ceremonial presidential regiment is headquartered at Fort Myer. It is conceivable that Prouty may have been told that a unit there had 'presidential duty' and concluded that this meant protection. In any case, there is no evidence to corroborate this claim. If such a unit ever existed, there is no indication of it at this date. Regarding the existence of units in general, it appears that Prouty has no first-hand knowledge of such a thing, and is basing this statement only on his personal beliefs.

CONCLUSION

Fletcher Prouty was where he says he was during the period from 1955-1964. His position can be documented. That, however, is about the only thing about Prouty that *can* be documented. His statements, coming from someone who was verifiably in a position to know, sound plausible, and would appear to carry the credibility of an insider's knowledge.

But under even a slight degree of more careful analysis, it becomes clear that:

- a.) Prouty has no first hand knowledge of any activities involving Lee Harvey Oswald, a plot to assassinate the president, or any evidence of such a plot.
- b.) Prouty's allegations, while sounding believable and authoritative, are based primarily on his interpretations of events that took place, events he was in no position to have an informed interpretation of. Furthermore, upon questioning, it seems clear that many of Prouty's allegations are not even based on interpretations of actual events, but merely his feelings or general beliefs; in these cases, there seems to be *no factual basis* for the allegation.
- c.) Prouty has made a living writing about these allegations, and having Oliver Stone turn them into a primary segment of *JFK*; his statements allege treason on a high level by members of the American military, which is obviously a very serious charge. Under questioning by ARRB, Prouty backed off of, could not document, or directly contradicted his published work. Prouty's willingness to make such serious

allegations while completely lacking factual basis is extremely troubling; his statements to us for the record which contradict his past writings and assertions cast doubt on the credibility of both his allegations and his character.

Two things should be emphasized: that this rejection of Prouty *does not* reflect a rejection or confirmation of any other conspiracy theories; and that the ARRB did not seek out Prouty for the purpose of tearing him and his theories down. We had intended on hearing his story and trying to obtain suggestions from Prouty as to where we could find documents to add to the collection. Only in the face of numerous contradictions, unsupportable allegations, and assertions which we knew to be incorrect did we discount Prouty and his work. But, just as it would be our responsibility to expose inaccuracies in the “official” story, it is also our responsibility to do so when inaccuracies and misleading allegations occur within the research community.

i. ARRB Prouty interview, 9.24.96, Tape One, side one, 24:15 (as with all times cited, time approximate.)

ii. ARRB Prouty interview, 9.24.96; Tape Two, side one, 1:08

iii. Ibid, 1:52.

iv. Prouty, *JFK*, p. 294

v. Prouty, in the forward to *Plausible Denial* by Mark Lane, p. XV

vi. ARRB Prouty interview of 9.24.96; Tape One, side two, 6:10.

vii. ARRB Prouty interview of 9.24.96; Tape One, side two, 10:08

viii. ARRB Prouty interview of 9.24.96; Tape One, side two, 12:00

ix. ARRB Prouty interview of 9.24.96; Tape One, side two, 13:00

x. ARRB Prouty interview of 9.24.96; Tape One, side two, 17:05

xi. ARRB Prouty interview of 9.24.96; Tape One, side two, 29:53

xii. Prouty, in *Plausible Denial*, p. XV

xiii. ARRB Prouty interview of 9.24.96; Tape One, side two, 20:45

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e://arrb1/data/cbarger/wpdocs/prouty6.wpd

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- xiv. Prouty, *JFK*, p. 294
- xv. Prouty, *JFK*, p. 294
- xvi. Prouty in *Plausible Denial*, p. XV
- xvii. ARRB Prouty interview of 9.24.96; Tape one, side two, 25:20
- xviii. ARRB Prouty interview of 9.24.96; Tape One, side two, 25:32
- xix. Ibid, 27:53
- xx. Ibid, 28:30
- xxi. ARRB Prouty interview of 9.24.96; Tape One, side one, 37:40
- xxii. Ibid, 38:25
- xxiii. Ibid, 39:23
- xxiv. Ibid, 39:46
- xxv. Ibid, 40:54
- xxvi. Ibid, 43:07
- xxvii. ARRB Prouty interview of 9.24.96, Tape One, side two, 00:59
- xxviii. Ibid, 16:50
- xxix. Ibid, 18:05
- xxx. Ibid, 22:00
- xxxi. Ibid, 12:55
- xxxii. Ibid; this statement also occurs in the conversation which begins at the 22:00 mark.