

AFFIDAVIT

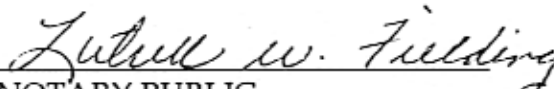
STATE OF FLORIDA)
) SS:
COUNTY OF WALTON)

I, Robert Griel Vinson, of lawful age and upon my oath, state and affirm that my statement given to Mr. James P. Johnston on September 28, 1994, consisting of 52 pages, each of which bears my signature, contains information that is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

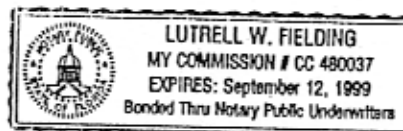
DATED THIS 30 DAY OF JULY, 1996.


ROBERT GRIEL VINSON

On the 30 day of July 1996, Robert Griel Vinson appeared before me, the undersigned Notary Public, and affirmed upon the penalties of perjury that the above statement was true and correct to the best of his knowledge and belief.


NOTARY PUBLIC

My Commission Expires:



RECEIVED AUG - 2 1996

STATEMENT OF ROBERT G. VINSON

to James P. Johnston

September 28, 1994

Let the record show that this is September 28, 1994, in THE JOHNSTON LAW OFFICES in Wichita, Kansas, and I have with me Mr. Robert G. Vinson, also of Wichita, Kansas, and Mr. Vinson, I'm going to be asking you some questions about your military experience and it is my understanding that you are freely and voluntarily providing the information to me. Is that correct?

RGV: Yes.

JPJ: And prior to today you have furnished me with a series of documents from your military file and we have gone through those documents and tried to put them in a chronological order here before we've gone on the record, is that correct?

RGV: That's correct.

JPJ: Alright, and what I plan to do, Mr. Vinson, is have you identify some of these documents for us, explaining just in summary terms what they mean so that we can get a picture of your experience in the military.

RGV: OK.

JPJ: Alright, I will hand you the first document on which I will put a No. 1 in the lower right hand corner in my writing and ask you to state what that document represents.

RGV: This is the enlisted record and report of separation from my experience in the army. I enlisted on 10 May 46 and was discharged on November 12, 1947.

JPJ: Alright, I will hand you another document which we will mark No. 2 in the lower right hand corner and ask you to tell us what that is.



Robert G. Vinson

RGV: This is another copy of an enlisted record and report of separation and this I enlisted in the reserves on November 13, 1947, and was discharged on March 17, 1948. This record will show, though, that they didn't get me discharged until April 25. . . or the 5th of April 1948.

JPJ: And that was army reserve?

RGV: Army reserve.

JPJ: Alright. Then I'll show you another document upon which I have placed a 3 in the right hand lower corner and ask you to identify this document for me.

RGV: This is another report of enlistment and separation. I enlisted in the United States Air Force on the 17th of March 1948 and served with them until January 3rd, 1951.

JPJ: Alright. The next document has a 4 in the lower right hand corner. Please tell us what that represents.

RGV: This is another enlistment record showing that I enlisted in the United States Air Force on January 4, 1951, and served until July 28, 1954.

JPJ: Alright. The next document I am marking with a 5 in the lower right hand corner. Please tell us what that is.

RGV: This is another enlistment record. I enlisted in the United States Air Force on July 28, 1954, and was discharged on January 24th, 1960.

JPJ: The next document I'm marking with a 6 in the lower right hand corner. Please identify that for us.

RGV: This is another enlistment record showing that I enlisted in the United States Air Force on January 25, 1960 and was discharged on January 24, 1964.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Robert S. Vinson". The signature is written in dark ink and is located in the bottom right corner of the page.

JPJ: And the next document is a two-page document and I will place 7 and 7A in the lower right hand corner. Would you tell us what 7 represents?

RGV: This is a copy of a check that I wrote on November 19, 1963, to go from Colorado Springs, Colorado, to Washington, DC for the purpose of checking into my personal record and finding out why I did not receive promotions.

JPJ: And that date that that check shows that you went back there is what date?

RGV: On November 19, 1963.

JPJ: And this was simply a voluntary trip on your part to check into why you had not received a promotion? Is that a fair statement?

RGV: That is correct.

JPJ: Alright, and what's the document attached to that which I marked 7A?

RGV: This is where I had to show a kind of identification to them for . . . so the Continental Airlines would accept this check. I had my service number 11-1963.

JPJ: Alright. Now, before going on to your other military documents, Mr. Vinson, I wanted to ask you a question or two about some of the information that appears on some of the documents that we have just been through. For example, on document No. 1 it refers to a World War II victory medal. Do you see where I'm pointing to that?

RGV: Yes.

JPJ: What does that medal signify?

Robert G. Vinson

RGV: It was a . . . as a result. . . doing service during World War II. It showed that we had a victory in Europe during that period of time.

JPJ: Alright, so do I understand correctly that every person who served in the U.S. military was supposed to have received this medal?

RGV: Between 1941 and 1946, I'm not sure of the first date, but the period of time that I served.

JPJ: Alright.

RGV: Anybody after 1946 would not get one.

JPJ: Alright. Now the next decoration I wanted to ask you about, well, I beg your pardon, on document 3, it again shows World War II victory medal and the providing for that and I assume we're talking about the same decoration we just covered.

RGV: Yes. I was supposed to have gotten another medal too, but I . . . national defense medal. . . but maybe that's later, OK.

JPJ: Alright, the next document I wanted to ask you about which is No. 4 refers to the Korean service medal, the good conduct clasp with two loops, is that all one decoration?

RGV: Yes, we get it looped every three years -- good conduct medal and you get a loop for so many years.

JPJ: Alright, and a . . .

RGV: I believe that represents six years.

JPJ: Alright, the Korean service medal signifies what?

RGV: Korean service.

JPJ: During the Korean War?

Robert G. Vinton

RGV: The Korean War.

JPJ: Alright, so what actually was your duty station in Korea?

RGV: I worked in the defense in Japan called the Ashayia. We had a drop-off point there from which we took all the paratroopers from Ashayia, Japan, and dropped them in Korea.

JPJ: Alright.

RGV: And I was assigned to that unit for which they gave us the Korean service medal.

JPJ: So you never actually physically served in Korea itself.

RGV: I was there only a short period of time.

JPJ: I see. Then this document marked No. 4 shows the United Nations service medal. What does that signify?

RGV: That's United Nations service in Korea.

JPJ: In Korea?

RGV: Uh-huh.

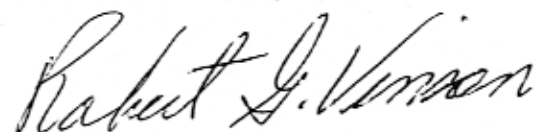
JPJ: Alright, and then the next one shows the national defense service medal? What does that mean?

RGV: That was a national defense service medal that I received for... back in World War II. Catching up with me then.

JPJ: Right. You referred to it previously.

RGV: Yes.

JPJ: OK. Then on document No. 5 under paragraph 26 referring to decorations, medal, badges, etc., it shows AFLSA with two bronze OLCs.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Robert J. Vinson". The signature is written in dark ink and is located in the bottom right corner of the page.

What does that mean?

RGV: I believe that's Air Force longevity service with oakleaf cluster on it. There's a good conduct medal, bronze clasp with three loops. I'm not sure on that. . . . I'm not real sure on that one.

JPJ: OK and these documents show, particularly document No. 6, that you attended an NCO Air Academy April 60 to May of 1960, does it not?

RGV: Yes.

JPJ: And what kind of air academy was that?

RGV: That's non-commissioned officers air academy which they held at Kadena Air Force Base, Okinawa, and they picked NCOs who were going to be future leaders to go to the academy.

JPJ: So you had to be specially selected?

RGV: Selected.

JPJ: Alright, and . . .

RGV: You were nominated.

JPJ: And did you complete that school successfully?

RGV: Yes.

JPJ: Now, I'll show you another document which we will mark as document 7 and ask you to state what that is.

RGV: This is another . . .

JPJ: I'm sorry. Let me remark that as document 8 because we have already marked 7 and 7A. Now go ahead.

Robert G. Vinson

RGV: This is another service enlistment record and this is . . . I enlisted in Air Force again on January 25, 1964, and was separated on . . . I was retired from the Air Force on September 30, 1966. That's my retirement DD Form 214.

JPJ: Now we'll come back to the time period that we're covering here, but I wanted to get these documents identified first of all. I'll now show you a document which I am marking No. 9 and ask you to state what that is.

RGV: This is a personal history statement that I was told to fill out and I was just given this by Capt. Robert (?) Cole and he told me to fill it out and bring it back into the office. I filled it out and took it back in and this is dated October the 15th and October 20, 1964.

JPJ: Yes, actually we put both those documents together, stapled them together because there were two separate dates.

RGV: Yes, one was dated October 20, 64, which I furnished some information on, and the other one was dated 15th of October, 64, which I had completed and turned in. There's two different dates there that I turned information in to them.

JPJ: Alright, at the time this document No. 9 was completed, you were stationed where?

RGV: Ent Air Force Base in NORAD.

JPJ: What does NORAD mean?

RGV: North American Air Defense Command.

JPJ: It's located where?

RGV: Colorado Springs. At that time it was located at Ent Air Force Base.

JPJ: Is that E - N - T?

Robert G. Vinson

RGV: E - N - T. Ent Air Force Base. It is now no longer there. It is now USA olympic headquarters.

JPJ: Where was Ent Air Force Base located?

RGV: Right in Colorado Springs. Let's see, I can't remember the address.

JPJ: Was it in the city limits of Colorado Springs?

RGV: Oh, yes, yes, it was right. . .almost downtown.

JPJ: Alright.

RGV: East of downtown about. . . 30 blocks.

JPJ: Alright. Now going back to document No. 8, this reflects that you were stationed at Nellis Air Force Base, Las Vegas, Nevada.

RGV: That is . . . I was never stationed at Nellis Air Force Base. I went there to receive my discharge physical.

JPJ: Alright, do you know where Nellis -- N E L L I S -- Air Force Base was?

RGV: Yes, it is located in Las Vegas, Nevada.

JPJ: Alright, but you were never stationed there?

RGV: No, I just went out there to buy groceries and to go to the NCO club and - once in a while.

JPJ: Alright, this document No. 8 also shows that you have a commercial pilot license, is that correct?

RGV: I took commercial pilot training, but I no longer have my license.

JPJ: I see. Was that done while you were in the service?

RGV: Yes.

Robert G. Vinson

JPJ: And you did become a licensed commercial pilot while in the service?

RGV: No, I became a pilot, but not a commercial pilot. I completed the training, but I never went to take the final examination.

JPJ: I will now show you a document -- a two-page document marked 10 and 10A -- and ask you to state, first of all, what is document No. 10?

RGV: No. 10 is a set of Orders sending me to Washington, DC . .

JPJ: From where?

RGV: From Ent Air Force Base, Colorado Springs.

JPJ: Alright.

RGV: And this document told me to report to a telephone number and they would give me further instructions there.

JPJ: Alright, and that was what date?

RGV: That was dated November 25, 1964.

JPJ: And do you know what caused the Air Force to issue this order to you to report to Washington, DC?

RGV: No, I was given no specific reason for it, other than just to . . . the orders were handed to me and told me to report up there.

JPJ: Alright, to a telephone number.

RGV: Right.

JPJ: And the second page, which is marked 10A is what. . it appears to be a continuation of the information. . . .

Robert G. Vinsen

RGV: Oh, this is telling me how to get there. Military Air was provided for me. It departed from the Peterson Field, Colorado Springs, and took me to Andrews Air Force Base, Washington, D.C. It was called the shuttle run between Ent and it went every Wednesday. It took the mail back to Washington, D.C. and any passengers that needed to go.

JPJ: Now I'll show you document No. 11 and what does that document signify?

RGV: This document is transferring me from Ent Air Force Base, Colorado Springs, North American Air Defense Command, to 1129th USAF Activity Squadron at P.O. Box 88, Boling Air Force Base, D.C. But I was given instructions to report to Las Vegas, Nevada, with duty at Detachment One, 1129th US Air Special Activities Squadron, Las Vegas, Nevada.

JPJ: OK. Well, how do you explain what this duty was? Do you know what you were doing there?

RGV: No, I had no idea what I was going to be doing until I got there.

JPJ: Alright, and where was it located in Nevada?

RGV: It was located . . . up on the test site. The AEC test site. Atomic Energy Commission test site near Mercury, Nevada.

JPJ: And is Mercury a small town in Nevada?

RGV: Yes, it's a small town; it's . . . I forget how many miles, about 50 miles or 45 miles north of Las Vegas, Nevada.

JPJ: Alright. Now the last document relating to specific military transfers and orders has been marked No. 12. What is that document?

RGV: That's my retirement order, retiring me from the military after 20 years, four months and nineteen days.

Robert S. Venson

JPJ: OK. Now, Mr. Vinson, I will show you a picture which for purposes of continuity I am going to mark 13. Tell us who is in the picture and why the picture was taken.

RGV: This is myself and General Latta awarding me the Joint Service Commendation Medal, which is called the Army and Air Force Joint Service Commendation Medal for the work I had performed for NORAD.

JPJ: Alright, and about what year was that given to you?

RGV: That was given to me in 1964.

JPJ: And you were stationed where?

RGV: I was stationed at Ent Air Force Base, Colorado Springs.

JPJ: Alright. I'll hand you another photo, a copy of a photo marked 14 and tell us what that is.

RGV: This is my retirement orders received from Col. Slater, and this was received at the test site when I retired from the Air Force.

JPJ: The same year?

RGV: No, 1966.

JPJ: OK. Now you have also given me a copy of a map showing the area around Ft. Worth and Dallas, Texas, did you not?

RGV: Yes. I obtained it about 1960-61.

JPJ: I'm going to mark it as document 15 and then we'll get back to this in a few moments. When you went to Washington, D.C. to inquire about your promotional status of the Air Force--that was reflected by document No. 7, the check dated November 1963--where did you actually go to make that complaint or protest, however you want to phrase it?

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert A. Vinson". The signature is written in dark ink and is located in the bottom right corner of the page.

RGV: I went to the Capitol Building to see the congressman from my home state.

JPJ: And who...?

RGV: At the time I enlisted in the Air Force would have been from Alabama, but I was referred to Mr. . . . I believe the congressman's name was Jack Jones from Oklahoma.

JPJ: Yes. Did you talk to him?

RGV: I did talk to him and he looked over the information I had--my evaluations, annual evaluations, and all and he made an appointment for me to see Col. Chapman.

JPJ: And who was Col. Chapman?

RGV: He told me that Col. Chapman was the Liaison Officer between the Pentagon, I mean the White House, and the . . . I think he said Pentagon-- I'm not sure. . . I better stick with Pentagon, because I'm pretty sure that's right.

JPJ: Then liaison between. . .

RGV: Between Congress and the Pentagon.

JPJ: Alright. Where did you go to see Mr. . . or I should say, Col. Chapman?

RGV: He was down in the lower chambers there in the Capitol Building. He had an office down there.

JPJ: Alright, and did you personally talk to him?

RGV: Yes, I went down and was sitting beside his desk talking to him. And . . .

JPJ: That was on November 19?

Robert G. Vinson

RGV: That was on Thursday, November 21. The day before Kennedy was assassinated.

JPJ: Yes. JFK was assassinated the 22nd.

RGV: The 22nd, that's right.

JPJ: So on November 21, 1963, you were in Col. Chapman's office and talking with him personally?

RGV: Yes, I was talking with him and he was going to make arrangements for me to go to the Pentagon from there.

JPJ: You were to see someone at the Pentagon?

RGV: Yes, I was to go to the Personnel Office in the Pentagon.

JPJ: Do you recall Col Chapman's first name?

RGV: No, I don't.

JPJ: Alright, but he was a full colonel?

RGV: Full colonel.

JPJ: Alright, and as you were . . . That's a yes I take it, that he was a full colonel?

RGV: Come to think about it, I can't remember.

JPJ: Alright, it may not be that important.

RGV: I just called him Col. Chapman.

JPJ: Sure. Alright. Then, what took place while you were there in Col. Chapman's office that you overheard that you thought was a little unusual.

Robert G. Vinton

RGV: I only heard one side of the conversation, but I did hear him say that he would highly recommend that the President not go to Dallas, Texas, on Friday, because there had been something reported, which I didn't hear what it was.

JPJ: Alright, was this a telephone conversation that you overheard?

RGV: Yes, this was a telephone conversation. I only heard his voice and his side of it.

JPJ: Alright, do you recall whether he had called someone in your presence or whether a call came in while you were there?

RGV: No, the call came in while I was there.

JPJ: Alright, and is that the substance of what you remember?

RGV: Yes, pretty much the substance of it. I do remember that part of it because he was pretty pronounced in saying that he would highly recommend that the President not go over there.

JPJ: To Dallas?

RGV: To Dallas.

JPJ: Alright. Where did you go then from

RGV: There was one other conversation. . . something about the advance group of congressmen have already left.

JPJ: Who said that?

RGV: He did.

JPJ: Chapman?

Robert G. Vinson

RGV: Their advance group. It was my understanding that he was supposed to handle all the coordination and transportation for the Congress, you know, in scheduling all these events--that's the way I understood it.

JPJ: Alright, then did you talk with anyone else concerning your promotion and that sort of thing, or . . .

RGV: Yes, in the Pentagon, I met with a personnel officer and then I met with a Sr. Master Sergeant who came in and talked to me and looked over my records and then he took them into another office and showed them to some officer, I don't know who he was or what his rank was, but he must have been pretty high. Anyway, he came back out--I wasn't there very long and he came back out and told me. . . he said we don't understand why you have been passed over, either. He says all of these are your evaluations? And I said yes, they are all there. And he said well, we'll look into it for you.

JPJ: Alright. Incidentally, about what time of the day was it on November 21 that you talked with Chapman?

RGV: That was around, I believe that was between 1:00 and 2:00 PM.

JPJ: In the afternoon?

RGV: Pretty close to 1:00 or 2:00 PM.

JPJ: Then, as I understand it, you went from there to the Pentagon and had the conversation you have just told us about?

RGV: Yes.

JPJ: And where did you go from there? The Pentagon?

RGV: Oh, I went back to my motel. I was finished with my business there.

JPJ: What motel were you staying in at that time?

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Robert L. Vinson". The signature is written in dark ink and is located in the bottom right corner of the page.

RGV: Well, I'm sorry it wasn't a motel, it was a hotel there on . . . just off of 8th Street, right near the Capitol, but I can't remember the name of it. I might be able to find a cancelled check I wrote to it.

JPJ: Alright, then what did you do then the rest of that evening or afternoon of November 21, 1963?

RGV: I went and ate and went back to my hotel room and stayed there until the next morning at about 7:30.

JPJ: Pardon me just a minute here. This is a continuation of an interview with Mr. Robert Vinson. Mr. Vinson, we have been discussing your military experiences on the other tape and I have just switched to the second tape, is that correct?

RGV: Right.

JPJ: Now, Mr. Vinson, you were telling us your activities starting in the morning of November 22, 1963. Where did you go when you got up to leave the hotel that morning?

RGV: I caught a bus out to Andrews Air Force Base to catch a hop back to Ent Air Force Base, Colorado Springs.

JPJ: And what do you mean when you say to catch a hop back to Ent Air Force Base in Colorado Springs? What does that mean?

RGV: At that time we were allowed to ride on all kinds of military aircraft provided we were in uniform and could show identification, if they were going to the place we wanted to go at no charge to us at that time.

JPJ: So what in those days did an Air Force enlisted personnel have to do in order to accomplish this? Did you have to identify yourself somehow?

RGV: Yes, you just walk up to the passenger terminal and check in with them and tell them where you are going and you would like to catch a

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Robert G. Vinson". The signature is written in dark ink and is located at the bottom right of the page.

flight back there, give them your name and serial number and they would put you down on the passenger list.

JPJ: This would be the commercial passenger entrance, is that what you mean?

RGV: No, this is no commercial. . .

JPJ: OK. This is on Andrews Air Force Base?

RGV: Yes.

JPJ: Alright, so how long did you have to wait?

RGV: He said we don't have anything scheduled to Ent or Lowrey in Denver. I told him either one. And he said we don't have anything scheduled to go there today. I said well, I haven't eaten breakfast yet, so I'm going to go on in to eat. They had a cafeteria across the hallway over there. I said I'm going to go over there and, if anything should come through, you know. . . land and refuel and go on . . . that you don't have a notice on, let me know. And so I went on and ordered breakfast and waited about. . . I guess about fifteen minutes. . . and the waitress had just come and set the breakfast down in front of me when I heard the loudspeaker call my name and I got up--I didn't even finish my breakfast, I just took a couple of bites--got up, went on back to the passenger terminal. . . .

JPJ: You yourself heard your name being called?

RGV: Yes, I heard my name called over the loudspeaker and went back over and told him who I was and he said oh yes, he said you see that C-54 out there and I said you mean that third one down there and he said yes, he said go get on it--it's going to Denver, Lowry Air Force Base, Denver, Colorado. And I said OK and I ran, grabbed my bag and took out and I got out there and there was only one person out there at the time and he was walking around under the plane.

JPJ: Pardon me just a moment, what was your age at that time?

Robert G. Vinson

RGV: My age? Let me see that must have been 33 or 34. Let's see.

JPJ: That's alright. 33 or 34.

RGV: Yeh, I'm trying to think . . .

JPJ: I understand. Well, go ahead, I'm interrupting your . . .

RGV: This was in 60 and I was born in 28, so that would have been about 32, wouldn't it?

JPJ: Sounds like it.

RGV: About right in there.

JPJ: Alright, so you walked to this plane, which he had pointed out to you and describe the C-54, the one you got on, what did it look like?

RGV: The one I got on was. . . it had a nose wheel, looked like a cargo plane. . .

JPJ: Four engine?

RGV: Four engine.

JPJ: Propeller driven?

RGV: Propeller driven and . . . the only markings I saw on it was on the tail and it looked like an earth--the picture of an egg-shaped earth, but it just had drawings down through it like white grid marks separating, you know, latitude and longitude, like that, and it was brown or sort of a brownish color.

JPJ: Meaning the insignia on the plane?

RGV: Yes, the color of the earth. Looked rusty color.

Robert G. Vinson

JPJ: Alright.

RGV: And with white marks. So I got on and I sat down. Located me a seat and I moved up over the wings on account of they say that's the safest place, so I got in about the center of it. I sat on the right side looking forward out of front of the plane.

JPJ: OK, was there anybody that greeted you at the door of the plane when you climbed into it.

RGV: Oh, no, I didn't see anybody.

JPJ: The door was already open?

RGV: The door was open and I just crawled on in and a few minutes later, here come another gentleman up and they were walking around under the plane, I could see them through the windows.

JPJ: Alright, you say they, which means more than one.

RGV: Two.

JPJ: So these were two enlisted men or officers?

RGV: No, I didn't see any rank. They had on coveralls, which were the olive drab type coveralls. But I didn't see any rank on them.

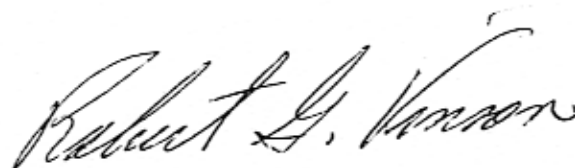
JPJ: And now at that time when you saw them walking around under the wing, was there anybody on the plane other than you?

RGV: No.

JPJ: Alright, so what happened then?

RGV: Well, they got on the plane and didn't say anything to me. I didn't see any manifest or anything.

JPJ: What do you mean by manifest?

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Robert G. Vanson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "R".

RGV: That's where they usually . . . if you're going with them. . . they'll write your name in because they didn't have time, you know, to get it done ahead of time when they were in the terminal.

JPJ: It's kind of like a log of information . . .

RGV: It's called a manifest for the aircraft.

JPJ: Alright, so you didn't see them with a manifest?

RGV: No. I didn't see them with any type of a log.

JPJ: Alright.

RGV: And they got in and started up the engines and were starting to taxi down. We took off.

JPJ: Now were these two officers white men?

RGV: Yes, they were both white.

JPJ: Could you tell me the best that you recall about their size and stature?

RGV: Oh, about just medium build. One was about 5'9", 175 to 180 lbs. and the other 5'11" and about 160 lbs. As the best I can remember.

JPJ: Nothing unusually striking about either one of them?

RGV: Well, neither one of them had a hat or cap and when they left the plane at Roswell they didn't wear hats as I can remember, but other than that, it's just, you know, looked like an everyday person.

JPJ: Alright.

RGV: That you would meet on the street.

Robert G. Vinson

JPJ: Alright, and they had no rank or insignia?

RGV: I didn't. . . I don't remember seeing any.

JPJ: Alright. So then the plane took off from Andrews Air Force Base and headed west, I take it? Takeoff time was 8:30 to 9:00 AM Eastern Daylight Time.

RGV: Yes, we headed west.

JPJ: And during the flight, then did you have any conversation with either of these men?

RGV: No, they . . . about 12:00 or 12:30, or right in there, or right about 12:30, I guess. . . one of them came on the loudspeaker in the plane and said the president's been shot and that's all he said.

JPJ: So, was he . . .

RGV: President Kennedy's been shot.

JPJ: Was he saying this to you?

RGV: I guess he was just telling me that, I don't know.

JPJ: Over the intercom on the plane?

RGV: Yes, right.

JPJ: What time did this plane leave Andrews Air Force Base, the best you recall?

RGV: Must have been around 8:30 to 9:00 AM.

JPJ: 8:30 Eastern Standard Time?

RGV: Yes, that would be Eastern Standard Time.

Robert L. Vinson

JPJ: And do you know the average cruising speed for a C-54?

RGV: I believe it's about 350--somewhere in that area. 325 or 350 or somewhere around there.

JPJ: Alright, and the plane did not stop anywhere up to the point where you are now in telling us about what happened, is that correct?

RGV: Right.

JPJ: Alright, then when this announcement came over the address system or intercom, whatever it's called, what did the plane do?

RGV: He just turned 180 degrees south and. . .because we was headed west. He turned south and . . .

JPJ: Pardon me, Mr. Vinson, 180 degrees is a pretty abrupt turn, is it not?

RGV: Yes, it is. He didn't explain why, either, that's all he said is what came on the loudspeaker. It said the President was shot. Or he did give the time, he said 12:29 I believe it was on the intercom.

JPJ: OK and, after the plane made a sharp turn south, what happened after that?

RGV: We proceeded south until we arrived over Dallas, Texas, and as we started over the city, we made a kind of a turn to the right and then we came in to a sort of a southeast direction and then, all of a sudden, we made a landing on a dirt. . .some kind of a runway. I don't think there was any strip down there, because there was nothing that I could see that would indicate an airstrip. But I did see a tool shed like they do when they are constructing highways, you know, they'll put tool sheds out there. I could see dust blowing up when we landed and it was a rough landing.

JPJ: So this was outside the city limits of Dallas?

Robert G. Vinson

RGV: No, no, this was inside the city limits, right along Trinity River that runs through there. We could have landed on old highway 45 which was being constructed then.

JPJ: Alright, and on document 15, which is the copy of the map, can you take your pen and put a little X about the area of Dallas where the plane landed?

RGV: Yes, this was right down here. . . . I'm trying to. . .right along south of this river here, right in here.

JPJ: OK. And you're putting an X on that document?

RGV: Right.

JPJ: Alright, and had anything been said to you after the announcement over the intercom about the president being shot and the time that you landed in Dallas?

RGV: Nothing else was said.

JPJ: Alright. So, the plane came in and, when you said it was in a southeasterly direction, are you saying that it's heading was southeast or it was coming from the southeast?

RGV: No, it was headed southeast.

JPJ: Alright.

RGV: Heading in a kind of a southeast direction.

JPJ: OK.

RGV: To land. It landed in a southeast direction.

JPJ: Alright. So, we're clear it made a turn to the right, you said, which would have meant that it would have turned to the west.

Robert J. Vinson

RGV: Right. Sort of south . . . southeast and it made sort of an L or U, come back something like this.

JPJ: So would it have been heading--heading southeast or southwest?

RGV: Well, southeast. The plane was headed southeast when it landed.

JPJ: OK. So, it. . . .

RGV: We were coming in from the north and we veered to the right . . .

JPJ: Or the west.

RGV: Because we were right over Dallas.

JPJ: Alright.

RGV: And there had to be some room to come in to the approach.

JPJ: Right.

RGV: So that we moved to the right, to the west to get an approach into this dirt runway and dirt field or whatever it was.

JPJ: At the time the plane landed, which direction was it going when it landed?

RGV: Southeast.

JPJ: Southeast. Very good. And what did you observe then, after it landed and stopped?

RGV: Well, either the pilot or the copilot, I don't know which one he was, because I didn't see them get into the cockpit--they just pulled the door to behind them--and one of them came back and opened the door and shoved it open and two men came and got in the aircraft and just walked right on by me. They didn't say hi or nothing. They just walked right on up to the front of the aircraft and sat down.

Robert G. Vinson

JPJ: Were they carrying anything?

RGV: No, they wasn't carrying anything.

JPJ: How were they dressed?

RGV: They were dressed in coveralls. Off-white type coveralls.

JPJ: Was it the same type coveralls that the pilot and copilot had worn?

RGV: No, no, these were off-white. They looked more like the coveralls that you see men wear repairing streets or sewers or stuff like that out in the field or highway repair.

JPJ: Meaning the two men that got on the plane.

RGV: Yes.

JPJ: And tell me again the color of the coveralls the pilot and copilot...

RGV: They were olive drab.

JPJ: Olive drab.

RGV: Green, olive drab.

JPJ: Alright. So, then what happened?

RGV: They came in and sat down behind the cockpit up there and... well, one of them, the tall one, I believe I'm correct, the tall one, shut the door and locked it and they went on up there and sat down and then we took off. We taxied out a little bit and then turned around and took off the same way we came in.

JPJ: OK, so the plane would have been heading what direction, as it took off?

Robert G. Vinson

RGV: It would be headed northwest--in a northwest direction.

JPJ: And how would you describe the two men--now you've already told me what they were wearing--how would you describe their appearance?

RGV: Well, one of them was larger than the other one and he looked a lot... more like a ... I don't know, to me probably be a Cuban, but he could have been some other nationality in the southern hemisphere. The other one looked ... he was shorter, much smaller, and he looked, well, he was thin.

JPJ: White man?

RGV: Yes, the short one (5'7" to 5'10" - 150 to 160 lbs.) was white and the taller one (6' to 6'1" - 180 lbs to 190) appeared to be Cuban or Hispanic. I believe I would recognize his photo if taken back then.

JPJ: Either of these men have helmets or anything of that nature on their heads?

RGV: No, .. there were no hats that I can remember.

JPJ: Any insignias or anything that you recollect seeing these men wearing?

RGV: No, the tall one was wearing coveralls with a belt.

JPJ: Both of them had belts?

RGV: I can't swear to both of them ... the bigger one, I think that more than ...

JPJ: Alright, was it a military web belt or ...

RGV: No, no it was just a buckle that comes together.

JPJ: Just a leather belt?

Robert G. Vinson

RGV: No, it was sewn into the coveralls.

JPJ: I understand what you mean. Then, what happened next?

RGV: Well, we took off after about five minutes. I just sat there and wondered what we were doing ...

JPJ: What time did you arrive and what time did you take off to your best estimate?

RGV: Oh, I would have to say it would be around 3:00 to 3:30 P. M. or somewhere in that time span.

JPJ: What, that you landed?

RGV: Yes, there in Dallas.

JPJ: And how long do you estimate you were down before ...

RGV: We were only there maybe five minutes. Ten at the most.

JPJ: Were you able to see out of the plane while you were sitting on the ground waiting ...

RGV: Yes, I could see out the windows.

JPJ: OK, you saw a tool shed?

RGV: Yes, there was a tool shed sitting south of us when we stopped. Looked like it might have been a 4 X 6 ...

JPJ: See any equipment?

RGV: No, just a jeep.

JPJ: What color was it?

Robert G. Vinson

RGV: My mind says it had a little bit of orange on it, but . . . kind of gray, green with orange trim or something like that.

JPJ: Think it had an orange trim?

RGV: Yes, I think it had an orange trim.

JPJ: No insignia that you recall?

RGV: I don't remember seeing any.

JPJ: How about the environment around . .

RGV: The top was down on the jeep.

JPJ: Alright, the environment around this area where the plane landed, was it . . . were there houses or was it all vacant field . . . or what?

RGV: No there was just a big . . . looked like a sandbar, a big open sandy area . . . and there was some cliffs back up a ways, not very high . . .

JPJ: What direction from where the plane was?

RGV: That would be south.

JPJ: Alright, could you see any habitation, any houses of any kind?

RGV: You could see some scrub trees back toward Dallas, but no housing or anything like that.

JPJ: Alright, but how do you know you were within the city limits of Dallas?

RGV: Oh, you could see the skyline of Dallas. It was not very far from us.

JPJ: In what direction?

RGV: North of us.

Robert G. Vinson

JPJ: Alright. Then after the plane took off, as I understand it, there was no conversation at any time with you . . .

RGV: And none with them.

JPJ: Then the plane took off and went where?

RGV: Well, we took off and later that evening, I guess it was around dusk or maybe a little later, we landed at. . . on a base, I guess, because when I got off. . . first, we landed and they just shut the engines off and came right on down and didn't say anything to me and just jumped out of the back of the aircraft.

JPJ: All of the men, all four of them?

RGV: All four of them jumped out of the back of the aircraft and then . . . they didn't tell me if they were going on to Denver or they were going to stay there.

JPJ: Did you know what base that was?

RGV: Not at that time I didn't.

JPJ: Did you find out later?

RGV: Yes, I got off the aircraft and went over to a building that had some lights in it and inside of it was an MP and I asked him where I was at and he said you're at Roswell Air Force Base, New Mexico, and I said well, . . . I thought I was going to Denver, Colorado, and he said no, you're at Roswell.

JPJ: What time did the plane land there at Roswell?

RGV: Well, it must have been about dusk right around there.

JPJ: P.M.?

Robert G. Vinson

RGV: Yes, P.M.

JPJ: And that's Central Standard or what time zone?

RGV: Yes. I would say it would be Central Standard Time because of the darkness.

JPJ: Was it already completely dark by the time the plane landed?

RGV: No, you could see the outlines of the building. But it was getting dark.

JPJ: Alright. So, you ended up there, talked to the MP and what did you do then?

RGV: Well, I asked him where the nearest bus station was and he said you can't go anywhere right now and I said why? He said the base is on alert and nobody can come in or go out. I thought that was funny because we had just come in! And finally I sat down and waited and it wasn't too long before he come over and told me . . . well, you can go now, Must have been around 9:00 P.M.

JPJ: This is when you left?

RGV: Yes, that's when I left Roswell AFB and . . . he told me where to catch a bus downtown. I went downtown and caught the Greyhound to Colorado Springs. I called my wife from a pay phone there.

JPJ: How long had you been living or having your home in Colorado Springs?

RGV: Oh, let's see, I moved there in 1962.

JPJ: Alright, and was that in connection with your military occupation?

RGV: Yes, I was transferred there from Okinawa when I returned from overseas.

Robert L. Vinson

JPJ: And that's when you went into NORAD?

RGV: Right.

JPJ: Alright, and what did you do while connected with NORAD?

RGV: I was administrative supervisor for the Electronics Division.

JPJ: And what does Electronics Division mean? You talking about radar or what?

RGV: Radars and all types of electronic equipment--in which we handled all the SIF codes for aircraft.

JPJ: SIF--what does that mean?

RGV: That's the codes given to the aircraft for landing and instructions, etc.

JPJ: Alright. Now, when you arrived back at your home in Colorado Springs, did you pursue your regular normal duties with NORAD?

RGV: Yes, I went back to work--just regular job and continued doing my job.

JPJ: Now, your NORAD duty station, was it inside the city of Denver or outside?

RGV: Inside the city of Colorado Springs.

JPJ: I'm sorry, Colorado Springs. Alright, and when were you next made aware of some unusual activity going on in your neighborhood concerning you?

RGV: Well, this must have been, to the best I can remember, seems more in my mind, to have been around May or June of 64. But before that I was promoted right--not too long after I got back from Washington.

Robert G. Vinson

JPJ: Promoted to what rank?

RGV: Technical sergeant.

JPJ: OK.

RGV: And then about May or June--it could have been July--one of the neighbors, he was an officer there, Major Grable, came over--my wife was in the yard and he asked her what we'd been doing and she said well, nothing much. He said you must have because there has been an awful lot of people out here going all over the neighborhood asking questions about you--wanting to know what kind of people you are and all that kind of stuff. Well, she said I don't know nothing about that, because we haven't done anything. And then later on, must have been about a month or maybe two, Capt. Cole came and gave me some papers, which is a DD Form 398, Personal History Statement, to fill out and asked me to fill out that information.

JPJ: Now, this officer was who? Cole?

RGV: Capt. Cole.

JPJ: C-O-L-E?

RGV: Yes, he was there in the Electronics Dept.

JPJ: And the Personal History Statement you were talking about-- is that what we marked as No. 9 here?

RGV: Exhibit 9, yes.

JPJ: Alright, did he tell you why he needed to have you fill that out?

RGV: No, he just told me to fill it out and to turn it back in and I just assumed that it would probably be an up-date, you know, to get all the information. Usually you don't ask in the military, you just go ahead and do it.

Robert G. Vinson

JPJ: Right. Alright, so you filled out the Personal History Statement that would have been in October of 1964 according to the form, and what happened next?

RGV: Next, November he came and gave me some orders to go to Washington, D.C. and report to a telephone number.

JPJ: Now, what order, what documents represents that order?

RGV: That would be document No. 10. It has on there the telephone number that I was to call when I arrived there in D.C. for further instructions.

JPJ: Alright, now, this document No. 10, this order, states under paragraph 9 as to the specific purpose, it says "For interview at HQUSAF in conjunction with a Special Project." Did I read that correctly?

RGV: Right. But that's nothing associated with that during the interview I had up there.

JPJ: Alright, they never told you what Special Project meant?

RGV: No, or what it was or anything else.

JPJ: So this document No. 10 shows that you were going to Arlington 8, Virginia, correct?

RGV: Right.

JPJ: So did you call the number on the order?

RGV: Yes, and they told me . . . where the barracks were located on Ft. Meyer, which is right outside of D.C. right across the bridge.

JPJ: So, did you go there?

RGV: Yes, I went there and there was a guy there that told me . . . to take a room.

Robert G. Vinson

JPJ: How was this area marked - was it still USAF?

RGV: No, it was just two barracks there as you enter the base--that's an army base.

JPJ: A U.S. army base, Ft. Meyer?

RGV: Yes.

JPJ: Alright, and then what happened after that?

RGV: Well, I went down to the PX to get something to eat--they had a little cafeteria there. . .and I got something to eat and went back. . The barracks received a long-distance telephone call from my brother-in-law while I was there.

JPJ: Pardon me just a moment. This is a continuation of the interview of Mr. Robert Vinson. Alright, you were just beginning to tell me about receiving a phone call when you were on Ft. Meyer from your brother-in-law?

RGV: Yes, from my brother-in-law; it was a a telephone call advising me that my father was real sick.

JPJ: What's your brother-in-law's name or was his name at that time?

RGV: At that time it was Hall, . . . Ray Hall, I think it was Raymond, but they called him Ray.

JPJ: Sure. Calling you from where?

RGV: Lockhart, Alabama. That's where my father was living.

JPJ: Alright.

RGV: Ray told me he was sick and I told him that I was in Washington, DC and I probably couldn't get away to go down unless, you know, he got

Robert G. Vinson

real serious. He said, well, he would keep me posted. So the next morning, or this was on a Friday, I believe, so I had Saturday and Sunday there just to hang around. Monday morning they came with a blue bus and took me out to CIA headquarters at Langley, Virginia.

JPJ: Alright, anyone else on the bus?

RGV: Yes, there was some other people on the bus, but I didn't know them or ever see them before.

JPJ: Were they Air Force men?

RGV: Some was Air Force and some army.

JPJ: Any enlisted men or officers or could you tell?

RGV: Most of them that I remember were--some were officers and some were enlisted. They were mixed.

JPJ: Alright, so they drove you out to CIA headquarters at Langley.

RGV: Yes. We were all taken into this room and I started taking a psychological test.

JPJ: Alright, were you separated from the other men during the taking of the psychological test?

RGV: Well, from those that went with me, I was, but then when I got there, there were others already there. I don't know where they came from or. . . we never did talk to each other.

JPJ: But you weren't separated in little cubicles or anything like that?

RGV: Not at that time.

JPJ: So, just a big room with a group of men taking the test.

RGV: Yes.

Robert G. Vinson

JPJ: Alright, and how long did the psychological testing require?

RGV: Oh, it must have been at least three full days.

JPJ: Alright, during the evening, did you go back to Ft. Meyer or did you spend the evening out at Langley?

RGV: We went back to Ft. Meyer; we were put back on the bus and we went back to Ft. Meyer.

JPJ: Alright, and during . . . after the first day's testing, did you have an opportunity to talk to any of the men going back on the bus to Ft. Meyer or were you told not to?

RGV: Well, we were told not to discuss anything that we did or saw or . . . so we just more or less kept our mouths shut.

JPJ: Alright. Then you completed the psychological testing on the third day?

RGV: Well, this was kind of mixed up between physical examination and psychological testing. Monday morning I took psychological testing and then Monday afternoon I started my physical and was given a real hard physical, I mean they checked everything. Tuesday morning I still took some more physical--medical and then Tuesday afternoon another psychological testing. It's kind of mixed up and then on Wednesday, I think it was lie detector test they gave me. That took quite a while. .

JPJ: What's quite a while?

RGV: Oh, maybe two hours, three hours, two to three hours.

JPJ: I see.

RGV: And then that afternoon I think I took some more psychological testing. And next day some more physical and more testing.

Robert G. Vinson

JPJ: Alright, during the lie detector testing, were there any questions put to you at all about the killing of the President?

RGV: No, none.

JPJ: Nothing touched on that?

RGV: Not at all.

JPJ: Alright. OK, have you then described every significant thing that you were put through at Langley?

RGV: No, the last day we were given some more tests and about 10:00 A.M. or 11:00, we were all sitting in this room. I was called out of this room and into another room which had dim light, where there was a group of 8 to 10 men sitting around an oval table. They started asking me a lot of questions about, you know, serving with them and I told them, no, I didn't want to go, I was going to be discharged; I was going to get my discharge there and retire.

JPJ: Well, serving where?

RGV: They didn't say. They said go with us.

JPJ: And who was us?

RGV: Serve with us. They never did say who they were. It was kind of like, you know, go with us here.

JPJ: Right. So you don't know whether they were Air Force or CIA or who they were?

RGV: No, they wasn't Air Force because they wasn't in uniform.

JPJ: They were all civilians?

RGV: Right.

Robert G. Vernon

JPJ: OK. So, did you know where they wanted you to go with them?

RGV: No, they never did tell me where I was to go. They just said well . . . one of them said . . . I said no, I've already built my home and I've got a job lined up for me and I just don't care to go, wherever you're talking about.

JPJ: But did you know you would have to go out of Colorado Springs?

RGV: No. I didn't know where they were talking about. It's kind of a weird conversation because they are saying go with us and you don't know where it's at and yet, I don't know how to explain it.

JPJ: Did they tell you what you would be doing? What type of duty?

RGV: No.

JPJ: So, how did you respond? You . . .

RGV: I told them I didn't want to go. . . I was happy where I was at, I was going to retire there and it would cost me a great deal of money. One of them did mention at that point he said, well, we'll make it well worth your while. And I said, well, I prefer not to go. And they said OK and dismissed me.

JPJ: Alright, did any of these men that interviewed you or talked to you at this point have any type of identification on them? Did they have tags hanging around their neck on a little chain or anything like that?

RGV: They did not introduce themselves and they did not tell me who they were.

JPJ: Nor could you see any identification?

RGV: No nameplates or anything.

JPJ: So then what happened?

Robert A. Venzon

RGV: Well, one of them spoke up and he said well, you know where to go to get the plane back to Denver, don't you? We had to fly back into Denver and I said, well, yes, I think I do. He said well, go over here and catch the bus and they'll take you up to another bus station where you waited to ride out to the airport. It was between Baltimore and Washington. It's called the Baltimore-Washington International Airport. And that's where I flew out of. So, I went on and I thought well, maybe this is it. I'll just go back home and forget about it. I went back home and everything was alright. Nobody said anything to me, nobody asked me any questions. Nothing was said, other than my wife asked me what all happened and I told her.

JPJ: So, what happened next?

RGV: Well, it wasn't. . .let's see. . .next order came down. . .this was in April 1965. . .well, this was dated in February. . .

JPJ: You're referring to document No. 11?

RGV: No. 11. This is dated February 23, 1965, orders already cut, permanent change of station for me.

JPJ: To where?

RGV: And this says to 1129th USAF Special Activities Squadron, Headquarters Command, P. O. Box in Boling AFB, D.C. with duty at Detachment One, 1129 USAF Special Activities Squadron, Las Vegas, Nevada. And then this is all I had and it told me I was going to Las Vegas, Nevada, and gave me a telephone number to call when I got there. So I had to put my house up for sale and they called arrangements to make a move and the Air Force said we'll come out and move you there at Ent, said we've already had instructions to move you and we'll take care of everything and they came out and packed all the dishes and took care of everything.

JPJ: Did you sell your house?

Robert G. Vinson

RGV: Yes, I listed it in the paper and the first couple that walked up. . . the next day, I believe, after it came out in the paper walked up and said we'll buy it. And they didn't dicker on the price or nothing.

JPJ: Do you remember their names? The people that bought your house?

RGV: No, I don't. But it was financed or at least signed the papers there at First National Bank.

JPJ: In ?

RGV: In Colorado Springs.

JPJ: Alright. Now, so then you in effect were ordered to move to this new duty station?

RGV: Nobody never came up and said you are hereby ordered to do this. It just all happened. They called me in and says we're sorry to lose you and all of this, but these came down from headquarters and we can't do anything about it and I guess there was other instructions to the general that I was working for.

JPJ: So where did you then end up?

RGV: I ended up at the test site . . . about a hundred and some miles north of Las Vegas, Nevada.

JPJ: And was that near a city or village of any type?

RGV: The closest one would be Mercury, Nevada.

JPJ: And how far was it from Mercury?

RGV: Must have been about 50 miles or 60 from Mercury.

JPJ: Which direction?

Robert G. Vinton

RGV: North. . .northeast, I believe.

JPJ: And where did you live? You and your wife?

RGV: We lived in Las Vegas, Nevada.

JPJ: So you commuted?

RGV: I flew up there; they had a shuttle plane for us out of Las Vegas International Airport on Monday morning and brought us back in on Friday night. . .

JPJ: On Friday night?

RGV: On Friday night. But we could also come down on Wednesday night and fly back on Thursday morning. I drove up most of the time. Just fly back on Wednesday.

JPJ: Now, this base near this village, what . . . how would you describe it?

RGV: It was just a regular base.

JPJ: Air base?

RGV: Had all the facilities of an air base.

JPJ: Alright and did it have any connection with the CIA that you learned about or knew about or could see?

RGV: Well, I knew after I got up there . . . who I was working for.

JPJ: How did you know that?

RGV: Well, they pretty much told me, I mean, a gentleman that I finally contacted there in Las Vegas, Nevada, told me who was running the project.

Robert G. Vinson

JPJ: And what did he tell you?

RGV: He told me that the CIA was in charge of the project.

JPJ: I see. Did he identify himself?

RGV: Oh, yes.

JPJ: Do you recall his name?

RGV: Yes, his name was Armentrout.

JPJ: That was his last name?

RGV: Yes, last name.

JPJ: Was he a civilian or . . .

RGV: No, he was military.

JPJ: Air Force?

RGV: Air Force, yes.

JPJ: Alright, and he's the one that told you this would be a CIA project?

RGV: Right. That it was a CIA project that I would be working on.

JPJ: And what did you do on your project?

RGV: I was administrative supervisor for this detachment.

JPJ: OK, well what kind of activity was being conducted on the base itself?

RGV: Well, this has been declassified as far as I know, it's SR-71, which is a spyplane.

Robert G. Venzon

JPJ: And does it have a name that. . .

RGV: Called Blackbird.

JPJ: Alright, so, you could see those planes on the base?

RGV: Oh, yes. They took off and landed there. We flew them out of there all the time.

JPJ: Alright, you didn't fly them yourself?

RGV: No, part of my. . . job was to help get the material to keep them flying. Engines and prepare the TWXs to dispatch aircraft to go back and pick up the engines and parts from the companies that were building them.

JPJ: Alright, did these planes have regular Air Force insignia on them?

RGV: There was no insignia on those.

JPJ: None, whatsoever?

RGV: Not that I can remember. But I did see an aircraft at the test site that resembled the C-54 that I was on from Andrews AFB.

JPJ: OK, and, as I understand it, this was a highly secure base, difficult to get on and off?

RGV: Oh, yes.

JPJ: What kind of security procedures did you have to go through to get on to the base?

RGV: Well, the first gate you went through, you had to change badges and the second gate you changed badges again. Next gate you changed badges. I believe there was a total of five gates you had to go through--five, I believe.

Robert G. Vinson

JPJ: Alright, was your picture on each badge?

RGV: No. Not on each one of them.

JPJ: But on some of them?

RGV: Yes. On the first one, I believe. I can't remember. But what you did, you traded the badge at the first gate.

JPJ: Did you have to go through the same procedure when you were leaving?

RGV: When you reversed, yes.

JPJ: Alright, and did you end up your service on this base?

RGV: Yes, I have a set of retirement orders.

JPJ: And that's document 12?

RGV: Document 12, retiring me from the service.

JPJ: Alright, now, Mr. Vinson, did you believe that you may have recognized one of these men that got on the plane for this flight that stopped in Dallas and picked them up and then went on to Roswell?

RGV: At the time they got on, no I didn't recognize either one. But later on after I saw all the pictures and everything coming out on Oswald, this gentleman that got on the plane resembled him an awful lot and I can't say it was him, but he sure looked like him.

JPJ: I see. Did you ever mention this experience to anybody after it occurred, anybody in the Air Force or anybody connected with the CIA?

RGV: No. Well, I told my brother, I believe, and a couple of real close friends.

Robert G. Vinson

JPJ: Which brother did you tell?

RGV: I was trying to think. . . it was my brother Paul.

JPJ: Is he still alive?

RGV: Yes.

JPJ: And where does he live?

RGV: He lives in Leesville, Louisiana.

JPJ: OK, and then you say you mentioned or told some other close friends about it?

RGV: Well, just recently, I told Larry Hatteberg and I think I mentioned it to you and I've told, after they saw it on television, after Larry put it on television, people have asked me. I haven't told them the details of everything, but I briefly told them that if they'd read his book, they could get pretty much the story.

JPJ: Right, but as far as people in the military or connected with any law enforcement agency, you've never been interrogated about that experience?

RGV: No. My wife and I later on after we came back to Wichita, Kansas, there was a lot on television about the assassination and since I can't remember who they were at that time, but there was quite a few come up missing, died of mysterious circumstances.

JPJ: You're talking about people who may have been witnesses or somehow involved in the assassination?

RGV: Yes. We decided that since we had signed those documents that we would not reveal any information or what we had seen. . . we decided that we would keep our mouths shut.

Robert A. Vinson

JPJ: Well, now, when did you sign that sort of document?

RGV: I believe it was around January.

JPJ: Of 64?

RGV: 65.

JPJ: Of 65.

RGV: Yes.

JPJ: And was that...

RGV: Before I got the orders.

JPJ: Alright, transferring.

RGV: Yes.

JPJ: And did your wife have to sign it also?

RGV: She had to sign a separate one, also.

JPJ: Now these were secrecy agreements?

RGV: Right.

JPJ: Did you keep copies of those?

RGV: No, we didn't get copies.

JPJ: And who do you understand had you sign them?

RGV: At that time I thought it was FBI.

JPJ: Alright, but you're not sure?

Robert G. Vinner

RGV: I hadn't received my orders yet.

JPJ: Alright.

RGV: I didn't think I was even going.

JPJ: So they were people in civilian dress that came to you and said that you have to sign these secrecy agreements?

RGV: Well, they didn't come to us; they gave them to the Captain Cole . . . they worked through him.

JPJ: Cole?

RGV: Yes.

JPJ: Alright.

RGV: He passed this information. . . orders and everything else on to me.

JPJ: I'm sorry. Did you give me his first name, Cole's?

RGV: I believe it was Robert. Robert B. Cole or Robert C. Cole.

JPJ: Alright, so, that was one reason that you never said anything about this experience, because you signed the secrecy agreement?

RGV: Well, that's one of the reasons and the other one is that I had a feeling, you know, that there was something about this trip that I didn't quite understand and it didn't look right to me and I just didn't want to get involved and lose my career and my retirement pay.

JPJ: When you left the Air Force or the CIA (whoever you were working for) did you come back to Wichita or did you live for a while in Colorado Springs?

RGV: No, the first place I moved to was Long Beach, California. I took a job with a CPA firm there and worked for him for about three months.

Robert G. Vernon

JPJ: What was his name or the name of his firm?

RGV: His name was Mr. Brewer.

JPJ: Was he in L.A.?

RGV: No. Long Beach.

JPJ: Long Beach.

RGV: Mr. Brewer, Brewer was his last name.

JPJ: He was the CPA?

RGV: He was the CPA. My wife's brother lives here in Wichita.

JPJ: In Wichita?

RGV: Yes.

JPJ: And what's his name?

RGV: Robert Bolin. He called and told me that--the firm that was doing Price Brothers books needed help and were looking for some accountants and asked me to give them a call. And I called them up and they asked me to come back for an interview over Thanksgiving.

JPJ: To Wichita?

RGV: To Wichita. So I flew back here on Thanksgiving and met with Mr. Jennings of Mobley, West, Jennings and Shaw.

JPJ: This accounting firm?

RGV: Yes, used to be down on Main Street and Second, there in that old green building. Mobley, West, Jennings and Shaw. That's who it was.

Robert G. Venzon

JPJ: Mobley?

RGV: Mobley, West, Jennings and Shaw.

JPJ: Four names? OK. How long did you work for them?

RGV: I worked for them from January 11 until April 1967.

JPJ: And what happened then to terminate that relationship?

RGV: I was working too many overtime hours. I did all the banks and everything in western Kansas from January until April the 1st and I was putting in about 60 to 70 hours a week and only on salary and didn't get overtime.

JPJ: Before I forget it, let me interrupt and go back. When you were being interviewed back in Langley, were you offered special compensation for this transfer?

RGV: They told me that I would be well compensated for it.

JPJ: Did that turn out to be true?

RGV: Yes, we were given extra compensation.

JPJ: Periodic payments?

RGV: Monthly.

JPJ: And was this on Air Force vouchers or how?

RGV: No, mine was cash. They paid cash, even though we received our regular Air Force pay by check.

JPJ: I see. How was it delivered to you?

RGV: There was an officer, someone there went back to Washington, D.C. once a month and picked up the payroll.

Robert G. Vinson

JPJ: And brought it back where?

RGV: Brought it back to the test site.

JPJ: Which was where?

RGV: Which was. . .

JPJ: Near?

RGV: Near Las Vegas, Nevada.

JPJ: Right. OK. Just want to make sure we're talking about the same place. And the name of the little town that was the closest?

RGV: Mercury.

JPJ: Is Mercury still there as far as you know?

RGV: As far as I know, it is; it's a gate to the Atomic Energy Commission test site.

JPJ: How long did these extra payments of cash go on?

RGV: As long as I was there.

JPJ: At that base?

RGV: Right, when I left, that terminated.

JPJ: Alright. Are you an accountant by profession? Or how did you. . .

RGV: I took accounting in college. I graduated with a major in accounting.

JPJ: I see, but you're not a CPA?

Robert G. Vorse

RGV: No, never took the examination.

JPJ: Well, have you told me everything that happened to you in connection with this matter?

RGV: Everything I can think of.

JPJ: Alright, and in your article with Mr. Hatteberg, you referred to the fact that you thought there might have been a conspiracy to kill the President.

RGV: Well, what I meant there was that I thought it was kind of from outside somewhere, but I didn't know for sure. I still feel that there was more involved than just one person.

JPJ: That's what you meant by that.

RGV: Yes. Who it is, I don't know. I can't say. It's not been proven.

JPJ: Alright.

RGV: And that's what I meant by that statement. It's something larger than what they want to make it to be. One person, no.

JPJ: Right. OK.

RGV: In my opinion.

JPJ: Right. Now, Mr. Vinson, what I would propose to do, I'll have your statement typed up and then I'll mail it to you or you can come by here and review it and take it home, or whatever you want to do and . . . so that we make sure that it's accurate. And then I'll ask you to review it for accuracy, make any changes you feel are necessary and then sign it as being true as far as you know. Is that fair enough with you?

RGV: That's fair.

Robert G. Vinson

JPJ: Well, at this time, we will go off the record and, Mr. Vinson, I wish to thank you for giving us the statement.

RGV: OK.

Robert G. Vinson