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[full name of interviewee]

about Security - Space Task Group, MSC, NASA  
[main focus of interview]

Title: 1962 - Security Division, MSC  
[interviewee's current and/or former title and affiliation]

1968 - Chief, Management Services Division, MSC

Interview conducted by Robert B. Merrifield, Staff  
[interviewer's name/position]

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Biographical - [date/place of birth; family background] \_\_\_\_\_

Education - \_\_\_\_\_

Career Path -

St. Louis

Navy <sup>Dept</sup> Industrial Security Officer at McDonnell Aircraft,  
1960 Space Task Group as Security Officer

Topics -

McDonnell prime contractor for Project Mercury;  
on going conflict re classification of NASA programs;  
setting up security program for Space Task Group (STG);  
Astronaut protection; security at Kennedy Spacecraft  
Center; Carpenter family security; Langley security  
by fixed price low bid one year contract; opinions about  
Langley's Virginia location vs. Houston; recruitment to STG;  
entertaining/escorting dignitaries; John Glenn's return to  
Cape; <sup>early</sup> security at MSC; <sup>problems</sup> Secret transport of documents  
from Langley to Houston; relations w/ Houston Press;  
MSC <sup>visits</sup> badge system; Astronaut Freeman fatal crash  
and investigation; role of Public Affairs Office;  
President Kennedy visit; <sup>Vietnam</sup> war protestors & McNamara  
visit; classified <sup>space</sup> conference in Dallas; classified  
document monitoring; <sup>security</sup> land leasing problems at White Sands;  
appropriate <sup>Security Office</sup> functions; flap over <sup>crank callers/visitors</sup> security plans on Sugar Pack <sup>St. Louis</sup>;

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April 21, 1967

INTERVIEW WITH

DONALD D. BLUME, CHIEF MANAGEMENT SERVICES DIVISION

Blume: I joined the old Space Task Group in early August of 1960. I guess I was the first security officer that the organization had. Prior to my coming on board, STG had no security organization per se and had received some support from the Langley Research Center for personnel security clearance processing. In effect, STG really had had no security organization since none had been set up. And, apparently, there was a feeling on the part of some of the top people of the organization that they did need to start a security organization and it was my impression at the time that I came on the scene that they had been looking around for a while for someone to fill this position. I was working for the Navy Department out at St. Louis as industrial security officer for the Navy at the McDonnell Aircraft plant. McDonnell had been named in 1958, I guess it was, to be the prime contractor for Project Mercury. So I had had some degree of contact with Project Mercury. I had met some of the officials from the Space Task Group in some of their visits to St. Louis and I had had some opportunity to give them some assistance on some security problems that they felt that they were either going to have to face up to or had at the time. I was also acquainted with Bill Gray, who was the NASA rep at St. Louis in 59 or early 60 representing the Project Mercury people. He, in a sense, was attached to our Navy office so I did have some dealings with the agency which was very much in its formative days and not at all well known at the time.

I had a feeling for some time that the Space Task Group of the Project Mercury people were in need of a security organization just based upon

some of the limited knowledge I had of the organization and some of the problems that I could see forming. For example, I recall working very early in the program with George McDougal from the Project Office and George was worried about a security classification guide for Project Mercury. The program had been in existence for a year or so and there were some thoughts that there were some aspects of the project that should be classified but nothing had really been solidified in this regard. The program was going to be using some military-developed boosters which were to some degree classified and there were probably some overtones of classification in that end of the Mercury Program. On the other hand, 36 NASA was informed by Congress as a civilian space program that there were many people in the agency that thought that the agency had no business having any sort of security organization. This has probably been the basic conflict that the agency has had throughout its existence. I think most people that have taken time to think about it recognize that we do have to have some degree of a security organization, that we do have some access to military secrets, we do develop some material and information on our own part that needs to be protected in the best interest of the United States. And then on the other hand we certainly are not a military organization and probably should not ideally have the kind of a military security atmosphere that the armed forces agencies have. We had to walk the delicate line between. This was one of the first things that I faced up to when I came with the Space Task Group.

36 There was no security organization at STG. There was only myself and a secretary when I went to work in August of 1960 and we didn't have

57 much more than that for a year or so. Gradually the need for a security program was recognized, primarily a program of personnel security where we did do some degree of checking on the background and past behavior of the people that were applying for position with STG. Within the first two or three years of our existence this was the main thrust of our work. STG was hiring people at the rate of about a thousand people a year and a major share of our work load was attempting to secure some security check or security investigation on these people who were coming to work for us.

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47 Security also did get involved to some degree in protection of astronauts. I always questioned in my own mind whether it was really a Security job or a Protocol job and we since, more or less, reconciled this by having Security pretty well get out of that role. The role is now occupied by our Public Affairs people, and I think probably properly so, but in the initial days the security organization was very much involved in escorting the astronauts and their families, and offering some degree of protection for the families. This was a very limited sort of operation. We did the job because of a lack of capability on the part of anybody else in the organization at that time.

36 As I mentioned earlier, when I first came to work there I was pretty much of a one man security office, there was myself and a secretary and that was it. I was expected to do everything. I took care of the physical security even insofar as worrying about checking the cabinets at night. At that time we had no guard force. I was urged by our top

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people to participate in Operations so I found myself in a position of going down to the Cape and spending time down there during a launch, and coming back and finding two or three weeks work stacked on my desk

because I was the security organization. Back in the

early days we had some security problems regarding access to the Mission Control Center at Cape Kennedy. The Kennedy Spacecraft Center people were in the same position we were, in that they had a very embryo

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organization and they did not have any capability. I found myself accepting the responsibility for the security of the Mission Control Center during the NASA shots - Al Sheppard, John Glenn, and Scott Carpenter launches in particular. It was pretty hectic. I would meet myself coming and going. After the first year or so I was able to build a small staff, but it was still pretty hectic. We were trying to cover the Cape to some degree and Langley, and after Houston was selected as a Site we were expected to cover Houston. We found ourselves sort of on a triangular run between Houston, Hampton and Cape Kennedy.

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One of the early babysitting details I got involved in was when Frank Hickey and I took care of Scott Carpenter's family during the Carpenter flight. Mrs. Carpenter wanted to be at the Cape but she didn't want to be prominent. We were involved in getting Rene and the kids down to the Cape and keeping them more or less under cover until the operation was over. Of course, this was difficult, particularly with the problems that developed during the Carpenter flight. Another impression I have of that particular Carpenter flight was the press insisted on having a press conference with Rene Carpenter in the evening. I believe Scott

177 had been recovered about 3 or 4 in the afternoon. It had been a pretty shaky set of circumstances, and they were insisting that Rene have a press conference. She consented to having one around seven o'clock and Frank Hickey and I drove her to the press conference. In my impression, she was worn out, extremely nervous and upset, and didn't know what she was going to say. She went on national television -- it was a live show as all the networks had preempted time for the thing -- and I have never seen anyone carry off the deal better than she did. She was great. I knew how nervous, upset, and apprehensive she had been about making this appearance. She was a real pro at it. I had a lot of admiration for her, the way she handled herself and her family during this particular launch and the entire series of public appearances afterward. She did very well. The Security Office was all things to all people. We had no guard organization, and one night when I was down at Cape Kennedy for a launch, my wife, who was back at Hampton, received a phone call from someone at Langley Air Force Base. This was during the period when we were having a lot of high tides and excessive rainfall around Langley. The caller had told her one of our boilerplate Mercury capsules was getting ready to float away on a high tide. They were calling me to find out what we were going to do with the thing. I wasn't around to make any kind of a command decision. We eventually were able to make some arrangements for a guard force in conjunction with the Langley Research Center people. We entered into a contract for a service organization to provide guards for both Langley Research Center and to the Space Task Group. After a period of about six months we were able to solve that particular problem.

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Merrifield: Can you give me the name of the guard company, the company that furnished the guard force?

84 Blume: This was probably 1961, although I don't recall exactly when. The name of the company was, I believe it was our present contractor, The M&T Company, it is now the contractor here in Houston. I'm not certain of that, we had a series of contractors down at Langley. They adhered to a one year fixed price contract -- get rid of them after a year and bring somebody else in. We had a new one every year.

Merrifield: Whose idea was this, to get rid of them every year and bring a new one in?

Blume: This is the way Langley Research Center does their service procurement. I strongly disagree with this way of doing busi-

84 ness. They still do it on a fixed price, low bid, one year contract.

I believe that if you're going to have an effective service organization you've got to have some degree of continuity. I don't mean you have to have the same company forever. For example, our present guard contractor has been here for three years and has increased in competence every year.

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161 I was at Langley for two years and I would estimate that of that two years I was on travel for at least a third of the time so they are vague years. I recall that I didn't have very much home life. There were many other people from the Space Task Group that had less of a home life. It seemed like we were on the road all of the time. That is one large impression I had from the days at Langley.

Another impression I had was how little was known in the Tidewater Virginia area about our organization and how NASA was more or less accepted there, which contrasts greatly with the excellent reception that we had here in Southeast Texas, in the Houston area. It was as if we didn't exist or even if we did exist who could care less. I didn't like Virginia and I'll be the first to say I was happier than hell to get out of there. After they found that we were probably going to be leaving they made a very belated move to keep the organization there. One of the things they did was to re-name Military Boulevard, one of the main streets through Newport News and Hampton. They renamed it Mercury Boulevard and they named some very small bridges in the Hampton area, over more or less gullies, after the seven astronauts. I thought this was a little ludicrous as did quite a few other people. They also made an effort to show some appreciation for the organization by having a parade for John Glenn when he got back to Hampton after his successful flight. Their entire effort to keep our organization there could be pretty much characterized as too little and too late. Speaking of the seven bridges that were named after the original seven astronauts, during the parade for John Glenn, I was riding in the front seat of the car and John and Annie Glenn were up on the tonneau of the convertible. As we were passing down Military Boulevard, John remarked to Annie that very shortly we were going to come to the John Glenn Bridge, which was the largest and most impressive of the seven bridges named for the astronauts. We came to this rather unimpressive looking culvert and she started laughing. John remarked, "You ought to see the one that they named for Gordo."

Going back to the time that I first went to work for the Space Task Group, I never did actually apply for a job. They came to me and said they were looking for a security officer and would like to interview me for the job. I said I was pretty happy where I was. St. Louis was my home town and I had just bought a house. However, I did consent to an interview with Dr. Gilruth and Paul Purser at Langley. I managed to get a flight on a Navy plane and flew to Langley from St. Louis. I had lunch with Dr. Gilruth and spent several hours talking with Paul Purser. Then the following Monday, they called and offered me the job. I hemmed and hawed because coming with Space Task Group in those days was buying a pig in a poke. I was a career government official, I had opportunities within the Navy Department for further advancement, and no one really knew what was going to happen in the Space Task Group. The Space Task Group was a part of the Goddard Spaceflight Center and in effect was a field organization of a field organization, so going with STG was sort of a gamble. I wasn't sure I was in a position where I needed to gamble. I did, and personally it's been very, very gratifying experience professionally. I managed to rise with the organization as it grew. Of course I now think very highly of the organization, but at the time I went with them I had a lot of reservations. During that first year, I had some serious doubts about whether I had made the right decision, and I even went so far as to consider leaving until about the time Mr. Hjernevik came in. He started to assemble the administrative staff and I recognized that I was going to be able to get some support. It was very hard that first year, and I was not at all pleased with the

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general environment of Tidewater Virginia nor was my wife, and although people that worked there kept telling us we'd like it the longer we stayed that never was the case. One of the things that surprised me was that a few people that had key jobs in the Space Task Group organization did not choose to come to Houston. I had never been able to fathom the devotion to Tidewater Virginia that I still hear from some of these people.

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I was quite impressed by the verve that the Texas people indicated in making an effort to make us feel at home. The Clear Creek School District sent their superintendent of schools to Langley to spend a day or so with STG people to tell them about the school district. The Houston Chamber of Commerce had an active and progressive attitude that is not typical of most Chambers of Commerce. They did a tremendous job making us feel welcome and at home. There was absolutely no effort on this score so far as Virginia was concerned.

When I first went to work for Space Task Group I was head of the security office and on the staff of Dr. Gilruth. Since then, although I have risen in the organization, I keep going down organizationally. We had about 250 people I guess at the time I joined the organization and of course we've grown up to about 4500 to 4800. I believe we had around 250 people, so it was quite an embryo organization and it was awfully hard to forecast what was going to happen.

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One of the businesses we got thrown into involuntarily, was entertaining, or escorting visiting dignitaries. The first one I can recall was while

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we were still at Langley. The Crown Prince of Japan and his recent bride were on tour of the United States and they expressed a desire to the State Department to visit Langley. I believe they were visiting not only NASA but also the Tactical Air Command which had its headquarters at Langley. They also wanted to take a look at the very early stages of the Project Mercury. We were involved in security considerations for their visit. One of the protocol problems that we had involved tea and reception for the Crown Prince, his wife and their entourage. They had to have a specially blended kind of Japanese tea, which had to be flown down to Langley. This was just a forerunner of the number of foreign visitors we had, as well as a large number of visitors from our own country. We had President Kennedy on one occasion at the Cape and one occasion here at Houston. Vice President Johnson was with President Kennedy at the Cape for the ceremony at the end of the John Glenn flight. We also have had President Johnson here at Clear Lake on two occasions and President Kennedy once. On all of those visits we worked quite closely with the Secret Service on the arrangements.

After John Glenn's flight it was decided that Vice President Johnson would wait at what was called the Skid Strip there at the Cape for John Glenn to return from, I believe, Grand Turk. He was coming in on a Government plane that was to land on the Skid Strip. President Kennedy was back in one of the hangers in the quarters that had been hastily arranged for him. Vice President Johnson waited in an open car on the Skid Strip. There probably were 300 press representatives present on the Skid Strip and only about 10 NASA security people, about 20 Secret

Service agents and several of our guards. We tried to keep the crowd away from Vice President Johnson, without too much success. When Mr. Johnson decided that he did want to talk to the press, he was almost overwhelmed. I recall how pleased he was to be able to talk to the press in a pretty relaxed situation. It belies some of the criticism that he has received in recent years about the lack of empathy with the press. But of course this was a different day and a different situation.

I was also quite impressed by Mrs. Johnson on the one or two occasions that I have been close to her. She is an extremely gracious person and seems to be able to handle herself at all times. She is a wonderful asset to the President. When President Johnson came to Houston to address the employees of the Center and our contractors, it was an extremely hot day in June or July and the whole program was running late because of the President's rather tight schedule. A number of the astronauts and their families were <sup>writing</sup> more or less behind the scenes. I recall how gracious Mrs. Johnson was, and how she knew everyone that she should know. As far as I could observe she didn't make a misstep, and appeared completely natural in her attitudes and approaches to the people.

83 When we were at Langley, we were in no position to have physical security as far as control of visitors were concerned. We were located in about 10 or 12 different buildings. None of the buildings was capable of being easily secured, and we made little or no attempt to regulate the flow of visitors, as it would have served no purpose. There were certain areas that we did try to control, of course. In a business organization you

try to limit the number of people that have access to your top executives. It's simply a matter of good business. We really had no physical security, except we were able to lock up our documents at night and had a guard force to insure that these documents stayed locked. One of the problems we've always had involves the great amount of coming and going of personnel. We have people that are dedicated and work unusual hours, and for them security has been a problem. An engineer comes to work late at night, opens a cabinet that contains classified material, works on it and then ✓/4 forgets to either secure the cabinet or the document. This is the fourth governmental agency that I've worked for, and I have never seen an organization where its people have been so willing and dedicated to a job. Naturally as we've gotten older and bigger we probably don't have the closeness and the esprit de corps that we've had in past years. I've often commented that MSC is as close to being a nongovernment organization as a government organization can be, in the terms of interest, spirit, lack of red tape, willingness to get a job done, willingness to try new approaches, not worrying about how things were done yesterday or the day before, etc.

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The Langley days were difficult, but we had even more difficult times when we first came to Houston. This was primarily occasioned by our building situation. Our buildings at Langley were unsatisfactory, and we had a hard time doing our job while we were there, but at Houston we were leasing a number of buildings and various in-town sites, and we had tremendous communication problems, both in actual communication and physical communication.

153 One of the aspects that I still think about, is the move of our classified files from Langley to Houston. In those days we had a centralized file system where we had practically all of our highly sensitive documents. We had to move these files here, and we did it ourselves. It was like something out of a bad crime movie. Using our own security agents and driving straight through in some rather broken-down, unmarked government cars we escorted the sealed vans in which we had the classified documents. We did this for two different shipments and we had the same two security agents, Lloyd Yorker and Ed Barker, doing the escorting of the shipments. When they arrived in Houston, there never were two more motley looking characters, and I'm amazed they weren't arrested by some state officials for driving a stolen government car or something. However, they got our files here without incident.

342 One of the situations that we've had to contend with in varying degrees, is a hostile local press. I recall one particular incident where the security office got in a bind. It involved the death of Astronaut Freeman. His plane had crashed just off the runway at Ellington Air Force Base late one Saturday morning. The Security Office was notified fairly rapidly and managed to get down there in time to keep the curiosity seekers away from the wreckage. The local press was quite insistent about being able to go up and trample all over the wreckage and take pictures of the body and that sort of thing. We prevented this, primarily so that our accident investigation team would have a chance to form, to get there and to do the things that are necessary after any sort of aircraft accident. The local press was incensed. There was some degree of confusion on the

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part of the Center as to who did what during such an accident, so this led to a enunciation of an official policy as to how we would handle such accidents. We were then thinking in terms of aircraft accidents, and of course we did have another one shortly after Astronaut Freeman's death.

346 Our relations with the local press have always been touch and go for some reason. We've managed to give them what I consider to be a reasonable amount of access and freedom at the Center and to talk to our people. But it seems that no matter what you give them, they are never satisfied. The press representatives from the local news media that cover us on a regular basis have a badge that enables them to get into the Center here on a continuing basis. Generally we only ask they notify the News Branch of our Public Affairs Office that they intend to come into the Center.

219 We have had a problem in badging our visitors who come into the Center in large numbers every day. There are various reasons why they're coming to the Center, and we have tried to adapt our badge system to these reasons. We started out with our own badge system which I think was a pretty good one. It was later decided that we were going to have an Agency-wide badge system, so we adapted our own system to the Agency badge system. It necessitated rebadging all of our government employed people, which was not as large a problem as it might sound because it is necessary to rebadge periodically anyway. The very nature of badge system is such that the longer it's in existence the less valuable it is.

People lose badges, badges disappear, and they cease to have any validity after a certain length of time. The present badge system is expected to have a five year existence.

339 Tied in with the badging problem of course, is the fact that we have roughly 10,000 vehicles on the Center every day and we have the problem of how to control and identify these particular vehicles. In the early days here at the Clear Lake Site we had a lack of parking spaces. The Agency had the problem of convincing Congress that we had approximately one car for every one that worked here at the Center. It's not quite that bad, but along the East Coast they generally figure you need one parking spot for every two employees. Our ratio is quite a bit lower than that, about 1.2 to 1, I think. For awhile we had roughly 10,000 cars and only about 2,000 parking spaces. We also have a problem with unreasonable expectations on the part of our employees. They all expect to drive up and park their car within about 5 feet of where they work. This has given the Security Office problems. I think we have had more problems with the parking situation out of proportion to its importance than any other responsibility that we've had in Security operations. We don't seem to have the unreasonable expectations in regard to parking with people who have worked for the government in Washington or in other large cities. There the parking situation is pretty horrible, since you have to pay for parking.

342 As I mentioned earlier when I was talking about Ted Freeman's accident, it happened almost at noon on a Saturday. It was the 31st of October,

and as I recall, several of the astronauts were off goose hunting and couldn't be readily located. We also had a problem locating a proper official to go to the home of Mrs. Freeman and notify her of the accident. Someone, I believe it was Deke Slayton, was enroute, I understand that a member of the press got to the house ahead of him and informed her of the accident. To say the least, it was disturbing to all of us. Also some of the astronauts were needed to serve on the accident investigation team, and it took time to locate them. The accident investigation team was headed up by Deke Slayton, and included Alan Shepard, and as I recall, a couple of our pilots. We had a problem in communications, partially because it was a Saturday and partly because we'd never handled this sort of thing. I think we have worked out procedures to eliminate the initial confusion that occurred that day, but anytime something happens on a day that's not a normal work day, and people are scattered all over, I think there will be problems no matter how well you try to organize the thing in advance. In Security, we were fairly fortunate in that we had three or four of our fellows working that day, and several others at home were quickly located. Joe <sup>IR</sup> Pritle and John Lancelot, who no longer works for us, were working that day. I think they were the first ones at the scene of the accident. Everett <sup>SHAFFER</sup> ~~Schaeffer~~ spent a lonely night at the scene of the accident that particular night, helping to keep curiosity seekers away. One of the problems we had on this accident was that it occurred on private property. There was some question as to what legal right the government had keeping people off of private property. It was only considerably after the accident that we were finally able to get to the owner of the property. Actually it was Humble Oil property but it was

leased out to a guy that was running some cattle on the land. We finally were able to locate him and of course he assented to our taking charge. We also had a legal question as to whether we could use our guards who are not government employees in this sort of a role. We decided that we would generally use our security people in the main roles, but did use some of the guards to direct traffic and man road blocks. We were also able later to secure some support from the Harris County sheriff's office. They kept people from entering the access roads that led into the scene of the accident. Since the accident was easily accessible from adjoining highways, anyone, if they were enterprising enough, could walk up to the scene of the accident.

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One of the things that always bothered me, was that security personnel were often put in the position of being a public affairs representative for the Center. We never took the position that we shouldn't talk to the press but, on the other hand, that was not our primary role. I always felt that if there were security considerations involved, we should be present, but the main burden of whatever communication the Center had with the news media should be assumed by a representative of the Public Affairs Office. More often than not we found ourselves in the situation where we were the only ones on the scene and our man was in effect acting as a security man, a public affairs officer, and the senior spokesman for the Center. It put us in a rather ambiguous situation. Under our present procedures we have a more reasonable answer to this particular problem. In the event of an accident, such as the See - Bassett accident at St. Louis, one of our men from Security was sent to each of the

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astronauts homes. They were there primarily to advise local law enforcement officers, concerning traffic movement and to keep curiosity seekers away from the family. They were not there to physically prevent anyone from doing anything. They represented the Center, being our face toward the local law enforcement officials. There was also a representative of the Public Affairs Office at these homes who was the face of the Center towards the news media. This to me was proper. There are so many things to be done and so many things to be coordinated that it really is not over doing things to have two or three people at these homes. They can be of service to the family of the astronaut. Usually another astronaut or one of the wives also are there to help out. I think this is a more reasonable approach to things than as in the past when we had been caught short. One example that comes to mind was at one of the astronaut houses in Timber Cove -- I can't remember which one -- where the only person on the scene for most of the time was Joe Pirtle, one of our men. The P.A.O. guy that was supposed to be there either wasn't there or he was hiding inside the house and refused to see the press. The press was about to revolt and if our man hadn't been there and at least talked to them, we would have had more serious repercussions than we did.

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Thinking back about some of the visitors we've had at the Center, I recall the time President Kennedy came to the Center. This was before we relocated to our new Site, while we were still in various buildings downtown. Generally on such visits the White House will send out an advanced team which will consist of a senior Secret Service agent from

216 the White House detail and usually one of the press attaches. Malcolm Kilduff, who later became better known as the press secretary that announced President Kennedy's death in Dallas, was the advance man along with a Secret Service agent. As I recall, a large group of us met in Dr. Gilruth's conference room at the Farnsworth - Chambers Building about nine o'clock in the evening. Present were Dr. Gilruth, Walt Williams, Wes Hjernevik, myself, Frank Hickey, eight or ten NASA officials, and these two representatives of the White House. It was decided that we would use the Rich Building, as it had a high bay area, and could be used to display some hardware. We planned to set up a small conference room on the first floor where the President could be briefed by some of our key officials. Around ten o'clock, this particular evening, the entire group made a run down to the Rich Building to take a look at things. At this stage in time we had recently picked up a new guard contractor, and the contractor had only been on duty about a week. The guards had not been completely uniformed, and we were having quite a time getting them up to what we considered to be an adequate level of performance. This entire group of top MSC officials and White House officials got out of the cars, and as they went into the lobby of the building, the first guard they saw was one of the most raggedy looking characters you've ever seen in your life. His shirt did not match his pants, he wore no tie, and in general looked like he had been recruited from Skid Row. I was mortified and Wes Hjernevik kept nudging me, saying, "Where'd you get that guy?" and "He's not going to be here when the President comes, is he?" and I was saying, "No, My God,

No, we'll get somebody else, and don't worry about it. We'll take care of it." It was a pretty inauspicious start. We managed to work out most of our problems, though, and what I considered a pretty smooth operation when President Kennedy visited us on that particular occasion.

217 Another time we had a visitor under pretty wild conditions, was when Mr. McNamara came to the Center. At the time the Defense Department was considering dropping their Dynasoar Program and implementing the MOL Program. I believe McNamara had been out to Seattle to the Boeing plant, and in typical McNamara way of doing business, flew into Houston at about nine o'clock on a Thursday night for a three-hour meeting with Dr. Gilruth and our top MSC officials. He was then to leave at midnight. It was one of these visits that had split second timing. We at Security were given the job of assuring that it was brought off with this split second precision. He was using one of the Air Force planes that's assigned to the White House. Originally the party planned to stop at Houston en route to Seattle, but the airport was closed. They came in on the way back and the time schedule was more constricted than it originally was. We arranged to have a cavalcade of cars out at the airport, met the plane and got the McNamara party to the Farnsworth - Chambers Building in good order. We heard some rumors that there were going to be some pickets at the airport when Mr. McNamara departed. Apparently the pickets weren't there when he arrived, because they weren't certain when he was going to get in. I recall vividly that when he left there were twenty-five or thirty pickets present who were protesting the Viet Nam War. We also had heard some rumors that they were going to attempt

to get on the airplane and deliver some sort of protest to

Mr. McNamara about the Defense Department policies. We felt that we were going to have a pretty wild time when we delivered the party to the airport. We alerted the plane captain to this possibility, and he took it pretty coolly. He and his crew were ready to give us whatever assistance we might need, but we managed to get the McNamara group back on the plane without incident other than a lot of pickets waving their signs in the Secretary's face. I have never seen any individual move so rapidly nor is such a no-nonsense person as Mr. McNamara. He has split second schedules and he keeps them.

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Another problem, that we had fairly early in the game was that somehow or other the Center or the Agency became committed to co-sponsoring with the ATAA, a classified conference on space. This was a regional conference, and was to be held in Dallas. Paul Purser and I flew up to Dallas for some of the preliminary conversations. They had me along to bless the space that was being used for a classified conference. When I saw the rooms that they wanted to use, I about had a heart attack, because they were horrible from a security standpoint. We and the ATAA and the various speakers spent many agonizing days reappraising the content of their speeches, working diligently to keep the classified content to an absolute minimum. Also, a part of the problem, some of the speakers were talking about classified Defense Department programs and projects, and the Air Force when it learned about it, they weren't kindly inclined toward their classified material being discussed at a meeting where it was so difficult to control access. Another problem we had was with the huge

numbers that were present at this particular meeting. It was one of the first ATAA conferences on manned space flight. These have now become an annual affair, but this was the first one, and the registration numbers were, as I recall, in the neighborhood of fifteen hundred. We finally managed to put the classified presentations in the most secure of the conference rooms that were available. The main part of the conference was at the Marriott Motel in Dallas, and one of the main speeches was to be held at Dallas Municipal Auditorium. Initially, this was to be classified and this was a horror story from my point of view -- trying to hold that classified conference in the Municipal Auditorium.

We have security responsibilities to varying degrees at remote sites, other facilities and other contractors facilities. I guess it really comes down to the basic point that any time a government agency has classification authority or has responsibility or authority to classify material it has a basic responsibility throughout the life of that material to insure that it is properly taken care of, no matter who has it. This is a responsibility that sometimes some of us, no matter what organization we work for, seem to forget. It's always easy to stamp confidential or secret on a piece of paper and then let it go on its way, but you have to remember that once you've done this, you've assumed responsibility for it. So far as our industrial contractors are concerned, we generally work through the Defense Department with them. NASA participates in the Department of Defense Industrial Security Program as does the Federal Aviation Agency, the Department of Commerce, and practically all other government agencies, except the AEC and some of

the extremely sensitive government agencies. What this means is that we put the same rules on our classified material for, say, Grumman, North American or McDonnell, our main contractors, as does the Defense Department. Insofar as facilities are concerned, those that are across the street from us here and belong to TRW, General Electric or IBM -- they have a DOD facility clearance, and are inspected periodically by the Defense Department for the way they are protecting the classified material that is located in these facilities, whether it's NASA's or the Defense Department's. We as a contracting activity that generates classified material and has classified contracts, have the right to go into these facilities at any time, either with the DOD or by ourselves, and check to see how it's being taken care of. Generally, we would not do this, rather we would do it through the Defense Department organization that is responsible for the classified material. We work closely with and generally have excellent cooperation from the Defense Department. Originally this was the responsibility of the three services, but it's now been consolidated into the Defense Department itself, and in each of the new contract management regions that the DOD has established is a security arm that represents all of the services. I think this arrangement is an improvement, because previously there were some variations as to the way the Army, Navy or Air Force approached their security programs. We also have a degree of responsibility for security at the main contractor plants at Downey, St. Louis, and Long Island, but here again we rely upon the Defense Department primarily to represent our interests. At White Sands Test Facility, we have had a full time government security representative since its start-up. The fellow we have there, Sandy Sandoval,

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is a very talented guy. He has a Spanish-American background, is completely bilingual, and has lived in that part of the country for many years. Because of his bilingual ability, he has had a lot of other responsibilities put on him. White Sands is a remote area, primarily cattle country, and it seems that we have a great tendency to run down cattle grazing on the open range there. Frequently ranchers claim that one of our trucks or one of our employees ran down their cattle and want \$200.00 for it right then -- in cold, hard cash. This land that we're using out there has a very tortured history. It's federally-owned land, but it's passed through about six different agencies over the years. Who owns it, and who doesn't has been a real problem. The land is broken up into a number of different grazing leases, and some of the cattlemen that own these grazing leases have had them in their families for more than one generation. They feel that they have a vested interest in this particular land, although they have never really owned it. When we built our facility at White Sands we had a real problem with these cattlemen, and still do. Since some degree of danger is involved in tests, we always have to be sure that people, cattle and other livestock are kept away from our test facilities during tests. It's about twenty miles east of Las Cruces, New Mexico, and it's right up against the west face of the Organ mountains. It's a rugged area, and normally you would think there would be no one around, but it's amazing how many rock hounds, hikers and cattlemen are floating around.

We have had quite a few security problems with the place, not so much people trying to get in as people wandering

in inadvertently. Our area is so large that we have made no attempt to fence it, so we have to set up road blocks and make checks prior to testing to make sure that we don't have interlopers. One of our main problems has been the cattle that we kill. It seems we kill about one a month, and this ~~always~~ <sup>usually</sup> results in a tort claim against the government.

One of the things that concerned me to some extent in the early days involved definition of the functions of our Security Office. (I think we now have them well defined.) I certainly was not a purest or inflexible in my thinking, as to what we should or shouldn't do, but we became involved in those early days in a lot of things that in my opinion were not truly Security functions. They were more public affairs-type functions. Some we had thrust upon us because various management officials wanted us to do them. Supposedly we had a reputation for being able to get things done one way or another. In those days we didn't have a Protocol Office. We probably should have had one sooner than we did. The guy that was chosen to head it, once it was formed did come out of the Security Office, as did also his chief assistant. They have an extremely difficult role, and although since they left us, we've had our share of disagreements with them, all in all I think that they have done a good job.

342 Back in the early days, I was always concerned about spending a disproportionate amount of time on minor duties. An example was Security's involvement in the funeral arrangements for Ted Freeman. We had been told that the family asked that news media representatives be kept out

of the chapel. We more or less decided to duck that particular request, because we just didn't feel that it was possible. We did have two or three of our people at the church during the funeral, and some of the news media representatives accused one of our men of precluding their access to some of the astronaut families, not necessarily Freeman's family, but some of the other astronaut families. I ~~wan~~<sup>s</sup>'t there and I don't know how valid this charge was, but I did have to go through a rather harrowing, vitriolic session with some of these news media representatives before the thing finally calmed down. This convinced me more than ever that we had to get out of this type of function and into what I considered ~~it~~<sup>as</sup> more normal security responsibilities. When Wes Hjernevik suggested to me that we should have a Protocol Office, I heartily endorsed the idea. I don't recall that I was consulted as to where it ought to be placed, but at any rate it was put in the Public Affairs Office. I was also asked as to whether Frank Hickey would be the logical man to head it up, and here again, I heartily agreed. Frank had done a very good job for us on public affairs-type assignments, and had also had previous experience with the Secret Service. He probably had as good a background as anyone that we had with us for this particular role. To me it was a happy and logical choice, and has since proven to be so. I was relieved to get out of this sort of function. This thinking was also endorsed to <sup>a</sup> great extent by NASA's Director of Security, Lloyd Blankenbaker.

NASA is set up for the peaceful exploration of space, and we have no military intent. On the other hand, we do have classified material, and we're using some military-developed hardware. Some of the systems

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and hardware that we're developing has potential military uses, so we have to classify some of it. What classified material we do have within the Agency is primarily in terms of paper as opposed to hardware. On some of the early Air Force vehicles we had quite a few items of classified information about the capabilities of the boosters, as we were attaching a payload to these particular boosters. Some aspects of our system therefore became classified, because if you knew what we were going to do, then you could interpolate what the capabilities of the boosters were. This has become less of a problem as the boosters grew more obsolete. But, at any rate we do have classified material here within the agency, and no one has ever tried to deny it. It's pretty generally known, but it's also led to some amusing and disconcerting incidents. On one particular occasion our Director of International Programs, Mr. Frutkin was here with some foreign nationals. I believe they were from one of the African countries, and they were having lunch at the cafeteria. It so happened that some of the sugar packs that we had on the tables in the cafeteria contained security slogans and these representatives from the foreign countries began to chide Mr. Frutkin about NASA being a non-military agency charged with the peaceful exploration of space, and yet here we were with security slogans on our packages of sugar in the cafeteria. The irony of it all was that the Security Office here at the Center had absolutely nothing to do with these slogans. An overeager Center employee had purchased these packs, and had the slogans put on without consulting us. We didn't feel that the slogans were particularly appropriate, but we didn't object, particularly as there wasn't much we

could do about it after the fact. Mr. Furtkin insisted that these sugar packs be removed from our cafeteria, so there would be no further embarrassing incidents with foreign visitors. They have been gradually phased out, and I believe the present sugar packs in the cafeteria have some innocuous slogans glorifying the State of Texas. This is an example of the sort of inadvertent things that we have run into. Actually, as far as this Agency is concerned, we do not do an awful lot of what I would term indoctrination of our employees from a security point of view. We do give them security training in the sense that we let them know what the rules, regulations and procedures are, but in the Agency we have never tried to do any indoctrination, and I think rightly so. To my way of thinking, you can buy yourself more problems with indoctrination than

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you gain. We have a pretty sophisticated group of people here, and if you wanted to do any indoctrination, I think it would have to be on a pretty sophisticated basis. It might be self defeating in the long run. So, generally our training has been limited to reminders of basic things like lock your safe at night; put your classified documents in the safe. We feel that if we can let our employees know what the basic groundrules are and occasionally remind them, then we are doing a proper job of security training. We limit it to this. In fact we do have Agency instruction that requires Headquarters approval of any sort of planned indoctrination. I think this is a very proper approach. This precludes security activity that might become over-zealous, and possibly improper, and also precludes incidents such as some of the military services have experienced where various commanders have cast reflections upon their organizations by being too doctrinaire about security.

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It seems as if any time the Agency is in the news, and especially in an adverse sense, we have an upturn in crank letters, crank callers, and crank visitors. Anytime there's a major flight about to go, we have had a number of people contact the Center, and they always have an ax to grind. We had an upsurge of crank callers and visitors when we first established our offices here in Houston. I recall that one of the first cranks that we had, came around to see us, and he came more than once. This guy had a scheme to build a railroad track to the moon. The Center is working in the forefront of technology, and it's sometimes difficult to tell whether a guy is a crackpot or really has something useful to offer the Center. We can't be too summary in our dealing with these people, but we've had enough experience with them that now we have a pretty good feel for the ones that are cranks and the ones that aren't. I think we have had an upturn in crank callers and visitors since the 260 January 1967 Apollo tragedy. All of them have had some sort of a solution that would have precluded a problem or solved future problems.

Merrifield: What type of crank letter are you getting now?

Blume: I haven't seen too many of them. Some of them are regular correspondents. Some of our Security officers feel let down if they don't hear from one of them ever so often! One of the security fellows remarked that we had had a recent upsurge in our regular crank correspondence, particularly from "regular correspondents" that we hadn't heard from for a while. The January tragedy apparently induced a lot of them to write to us again.