

THOMAS N. DOWNING, VA., CHAIRMAN

HENRY B. GONZALEZ, TEX.
RICHARDSON PREYER, N.C.
LOUIS STOKES, OHIO
WALTER E. FAUNTROY, D.C.
YVONNE BRATHWAITE BURKE, CALIF.
CHRISTOPHER J. DODD, CONN.
HAROLD S. FORD, TENN.

SAMUEL L. DEVINE, OHIO
BURT L. TALCOTT, CALIF.
STEWART B. MCKINNEY, CONN.
CHARLES THONE, NEBR.

(202) 225-4624

Select Committee on Assassinations

U.S. House of Representatives

3341 HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING, ANNEX 2

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

December 9, 1976

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. Sprague
FROM: Al Lewis
SUBJECT: Kennedy

You asked me to interview an applicant named Wayne Poucher (R.D. #2, Cloverdale, Va. (703) 992-4034) who has been persistently calling the office concerning his letter and his resume which he sent on November 21. I examined his resume and called him arranging an appointment for 10:30 this morning. I noticed in the resume that he had founded "Life Line, Inc." in October of 1958 and served in that capacity through May 1, 1963. "Life Line" sounded familiar, but I could not remember where until late last evening when reviewing the book by Peter Noyes Legacy of Doubt, I noticed on page 77 the following statement: "Among Ruby's possession's Dallas police found two scripts from H.L. Hunt's radio program, 'Life Line,' which was decidedly right-wing. The Commission satisfied itself that Ruby acquired the scripts a few weeks before the JFK assassination in bags of "H.L.H." food items he had picked up at the Texas Products Show. (H.L.H. is a division of the Hunt Oil Company.)" I talked to Burt Chardak and we recalled that Life Line produced a far right series of programs which had been syndicated through numerous radio and television stations in the late 1950's and early 1960's.

I interviewed Poucher concerning his qualifications and delicately mentioned Life Line, inquiring as to any relationship with H.L. Hunt. Poucher indicated that he knew Hunt very well, for he had sponsored Life Line in October of 1958 and he, Poucher, was the founder. He indicated that Hunt had substantial interest and influence in the future programs sponsored by Life Line.

36

KENNEDY

He related several incidents: when JFK was nominated in 1960, Hunt told him that at 3:00 in the morning after the nomination, JFK arrived at Hunt's hotel suite unannounced and requested Hunt's personal influence in persuading LBJ to accept the Vice-Presidential nomination on Kennedy's ticket. Hunt agreed and apparently persuaded LBJ to take the position. Thereafter, Hunt endorsed the Kennedy/Johnson ticket, but subsequently, JFK repudiated his endorsement. Apparently this led to some animosity by Hunt against Kennedy, and significant disagreement with his policies. Poucher does not suggest that Hunt ever made any threats.

Early in 1963, Poucher thinks it was in February, Hunt called Poucher on the telephone indicating that he was in the Mayflower Hotel and asked Poucher to join him for dinner and thereafter meet some people. They met for dinner and then retired to Hunt's suite in the Mayflower awaiting the arrival of their guests. Shortly, three men identified as exiled Cubans entered and introduced themselves. Poucher does not know who arranged the appointment and cannot specifically remember the names of the three Cubans; but identifies them as follows:

1. A Captain in Castro's Air Force who fought the revolutionaries at the Bay of Pigs; subsequently, he defected by flying a MIG out of Cuba to the United States.

2. A prominent individual in the anti-Castro movement who was the spokesman for the group and indicated that he was to be the President-In-Exile of the new government; he had cut an anti-Castro record and later was the one who dropped counterfeit pesos over Cuba out of an airplane; apparently, he had been arrested and committed to prison in the United States for the latter activity.

3. A lawyer from Cuba who was tall, distinguished with white hair and was quiet throughout the discussion.

The proposal to Hunt: these three were spokesmen for the Cuban exiles who had decided to form a government-in-exile which had been promised financial support by the Catholic Church in Rome providing they could show some financial solvency on their own. They required ten million dollars to show this strength, and if they would get the money from Hunt, they would be able to secure the additional financing. Their idea was then to develop and train an army in Guatamala and attack Cuba again. They hoped to have Hunt use his influence with the United States Government to recognize their government-in-exile.

Poucher says he argued fervently against this proposition and Hunt did not seem favorably inclined. Hunt indicated that he felt this was against the law and particularly emphasized, however, that he had no influence with JFK. He stressed that his influence was solely with LBJ. The Cubans continued to try to persuade Hunt; Poucher excused himself and left the meeting. Hunt never mentioned the incident again to Poucher and in fact, they never had a social conversation again.

Shortly thereafter, Poucher received a telegram from Hunt "out of the blue" which terminated his service with Life Line as of May 1, 1963. Poucher could understand no reason for this, and sued both Hunt and Life Line in the Federal Courts in Washington for money owed him for the production of television shows. He used Warren Wood, Esq., a Washington lawyer to represent him, but the suit dragged on; finally they gave up because of the time and expense.

Poucher states that this incident, to his knowledge, had never been divulged before and he had never been interviewed nor did he make a statement concerning it. He surmises nothing although does believe that the Cubans recognized that they could not obtain any influence on Kennedy through Hunt, but if LBJ was President, this would be their entre. The Cubans discussed their hatred for Kennedy for his handling of the Bay of Pigs.

Poucher also indicated that Hunt had a very strong tie with and influence over the FBI, for he would always hire former agents. In fact, Poucher was told that immediately after the assassination, FBI agents spirited Hunt out of Dallas to avoid any suggestion of his involvement.

Much of the discussion during the meeting dealt with Hunt's influence over LBJ; Poucher says he had direct personal knowledge of this.

Poucher indicated to me that he was now writing a book on his relations with Hunt and hoped to have it finished this month. He has not contracted with a publisher yet, but he does have a rewrite man hired and working with him. He stated that this was the only incident in the book that bore on any aspects of our investigation.

I asked him what he thought when he first heard that the President had been assassinated and he said that his first thought was that it was probably the South Vietnamese under the influence of Madam Nhu. He knew that the South Vietnamese emissaries had contacted Hunt on several occasions attempting to solicit funds for their regime after the assassination of Premier Diem. He also thought that it could have been the Cubans that had something to do with it.

In conclusion, Poucher discussed a position with us to investigate and research the project. On this subject, I have written a brief memo attaching it to his resume recommending against it.