

Mr. Hugh Aynesworth
Dallas Times-Herald
Dallas, Texas

4/15/85

Dear Hugh,

Today's Wx Post has a long and favorable treatment of your handling of "The Lucas Puzzle," along with a picture indicating that the years have not been unkind to you.

Now if you'd only had a similar notion in 1963, how you might have influenced history!

In the more than a quarter of a million once-secret pages I've obtained there is no question - the crime was never investigated and no investigation was ever intended. It also is beyond question, the crime was beyond the capability of any one man and thus, at the least, a conspiracy. So, we have a President assassinated in a conspiracy and the conspiracy was never investigated by any official body. (Whatever the truth we'll never know may be, I regard both the crime and official abdications as the greatest subversions in a society like ours.)

Two months after I saw you in Dallas in 1977 arterial blockages were diagnosed and I've not been able to drive out of (rural) Frederick since, but occasionally a local civic group asks me to speak so, as I've gone over records, I've kept a selection of the more comprehensible and meaningful on my desk. Enclosed are copies of three of the many reflecting what I say above.

89-43-84 is Serial 84 in the Dallas main assassination file. As you can see, the very day of the assassination, before Oswald was even identified to the FBI or charged by the police, the FBI there found the police lead "Not necessary to cover as true subject located." (Even if true, any conspiracy investigation is foreclosed.)

Serial 493 from the same file reflects the FBI's attitude that even a picture showing the President being killed was of no value (and it refused copies) because it did not show Oswald firing the rifle ("not sufficiently clear for identification purposes!"). The SA was not correct in reporting that the movie #failed to show the building from which the shots were fired" because it has almost 100 frames of the very window from which the FBI's reflected preconception has all shots fired. Only Oswald isn't in that window.

It wasn't only the Dallas FBI office. 129-11 is a main DJ assassination file. As soon as Oswald was killed the Deputy AG, then Acting AG, spelled it out, marked in the margin. (I have even his handwritten draft if you want it.) Page 2, marked, indicates the deliberateness of the FBI's lie that the Daily Worker first proposed the appointment of a Presidential commission. And I can also give you the FBI's copy of this memo. Together with the pressure put on the WxPost not to endorse appointment of the Commission that, four days later, was appointed.

I could go on and on, but I'm not trying to twist your arm. Not many papers are likely to be less inclined to report any of this than yours. But I am assuring you that those you were then dealing with knew other and better than they said. Gemberling, for example, reported that there had been a scar from the missed shot that sprayed concrete on Jim Tague and that it no longer existed in August when the FBI dug the patched curbstone up, flew it to the Lab and with a straight face "tested" the patch without telling anyone that it had been patched.

The initials "HPW" indicate that this copy is from the file of Howard P. Willens, then DJ, Criminal Division, on loan to the Commission and its liaison with DJ and FBI. There was no innocence, Hugh.

Best wishes

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : SAC, DALLAS

FROM : IC ROBERT G. RENFRO

SUBJECT: ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY

DATE: 11/22/63

Sgt. H. C. SHERRIL, Richardson, Texas, PD, telephone AD 5-5213, advised JIMMY GEORGE ROBINSON and members of the National States Rights Party should be considered possible suspects in the assassination of President KENNEDY, due to their strong feeling against him. He reminded that ROBINSON is the individual who burned a cross on the lawn of a Richardson residence approximately a year ago. He advised ROBINSON, white male, age 25, runs a service station located at Belt Line Road and Mayfield Road, Garland, Texas.

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44-1552
Jan.

Not necessary to cover as true subject located - JMH

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89-43-903

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NOV 22 1963	
FBI - DALLAS	

Advised JMH

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA GEN. REG. NO. 27

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : SAC, DALLAS (89-43)

FROM : SA MILTON L. NEWSON

SUBJECT: ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY

DATE: 11/25/63

Mr. WALTER BENT, Sales Service Manager, Eastman Kodak Company, Processing Service Division, 3131 Manor Way, and Mr. CHARLES BRONSON, Chief Engineer, Zarel Manufacturing Company, 9230 Denton Drive, were contacted by SAS MILTON L. NEWSON and EMORY E. HORTON on 11/25/63.

Films taken by Mr. BRONSON at the time of the President's assassination including 35 mm. color slides which were taken with a Leica Camera, and 8 mm. Kodachrome film were reviewed. These films failed to show the building from which the shots were fired. Film did depict the President's car at the precise-time shots were fired; however, the pictures were not sufficiently clear for identification purposes.

One of the 35 mm. color slides depicted a female wearing a brown coat taking pictures from an angle, which would have, undoubtedly, included the Texas School Book Depository Building in the background of her pictures. Her pictures evidently were taken just as the President was shot. Approximately five other individuals in the ~~area~~ were taking pictures at the time.

Arrangements have been made with Mr. WALTER BENT whereby each package of film received for processing by that company, will be returned to the owner of the film with a slip of paper attached requesting the individual to notify the local FBI Office in the event pictures in the package reflect the scene when the President was assassinated. Mr. BENT advised this company does the processing for all the southwestern states. An airtel is being furnished southwest offices notifying them of the above arrangements in the event they receive calls of this type.

② - Dallas
MLN/ss
(2) *ss*

89-43-493

SEARCHED	INDEXED
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NOV 25 1963	
FBI - DALLAS	

November 25, 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. MOYERS

It is important that all of the facts surrounding President Kennedy's Assassination be made public in a way which will satisfy people in the United States and abroad that all the facts have been told and that a statement to this effect be made now.

1. The public must be satisfied that Oswald was the assassin; that he did not have confederates who are still at large; and that the evidence was such that he would have been convicted at trial.

2. Speculation about Oswald's motivation ought to be cut off, and we should have some basis for rebutting thought that this was a Communist conspiracy or (as the Iron Curtain press is saying) a right-wing conspiracy to blame it on the Communists. Unfortunately the facts on Oswald seem about too pat--too obvious (Marxist, Cuba, Russian wife, etc.). The Dallas police have put out statements on the Communist conspiracy theory, and it was they who were in charge when he was shot and thus silenced.

3. The matter has been handled thus far with neither dignity nor conviction. Facts have been mixed with rumour and speculation. We can scarcely let the world see us totally in the image of the Dallas police when our President is murdered.

I think this objective may be satisfied by making public as soon as possible a complete and thorough FBI report on Oswald and the assassination. This may run into the difficulty of pointing to inconsistencies between this report and statements by Dallas police officials. But the reputation of the Bureau is such that it may do the whole job.

129-11

21	MAY 1965
RECORDS BRANCH	

File
HPW

The only other step would be the appointment of a Presidential Commission of unimpeachable personnel to review and examine the evidence and announce its conclusions. This has both advantages and disadvantages. It think it can await publication of the FBI report and public reaction to it here and abroad.

I think, however, that a statement that all the facts will be made public property in an orderly and responsible way should be made now. We need something to head off public speculation or Congressional hearings of the wrong sort.

Nicholas deB. Katzenbach
Deputy Attorney General

The Lucas Puzzle

Are His Claims of Mass Murder a Hoax?

4/15/85

By Cynthia Gorney
and Paul Taylor
Washington Post Staff Writers

DALLAS, April 14—For the last two years, a slow-talking one-eyed man named Henry Lee Lucas has been living in a series of small Texas jails and confessing to the most prolific series of murders in American history. In the even, remotely interested voice of a man reciting his grocery list, Lucas has described killing men, women and children with weapons ranging from knives to table legs to his own hands. He has confessed on videotape, examined hundreds of victims' photographs, answered questions directed to him by mail, and traveled thousands of miles across the southern and western states to show police officers the roadside spots where he says he left victims' bodies.

Network television has filmed him. Newspapers, including The Washington Post, have printed lengthy accounts of his confessions. Police investigators from 35 states have traveled to Texas with records of unsolved homicides, lining up for their chance to interview Lucas. As of this month, on the basis of what Lucas told them, police have closed more than 210 previously unsolved homicides; Lucas' own total of his murders, which keeps increasing as more people come to talk to him, recently reached 600.

This morning, in a copyrighted story spread across the front page of the Dallas Times-Herald, two Texas reporters declared that 15 months of investigation have con-

vinced them that Henry Lee Lucas is a fraud.

Citing work records, signed checks, traffic tickets, insurance forms, interviews with landlords and employers, and other forms of what they described as written and verbal evidence, Hugh Aynesworth and Jim Henderson wrote that what they had found "suggests that Lucas could not have been responsible for most, perhaps, no more than three, of the slayings credited to him."

Texas, along with every other state that has used Lucas' confes-

See LUCAS, B10, Col. 1

B10 MONDAY, APRIL 15, 1985

Lucas

LUCAS, From B1

sions to take unsolved homicides off the books, is obviously facing a credibility battle of major proportions. "Even the most rudimentary of investigations was not done by authorities," Aynesworth said in an interview at his Times-Herald office the day before the first articles appeared. "He always told me he only killed three people, from the first night I met him . . . I thought it was b.s. at first."

Of all the reporters who have gotten near Lucas, who have walked numbly away from his central Texas jail cell after listening to his affectless descriptions of the places where he "had bodies," only Aynesworth has spent more than a year trying to piece together the savage cross-country odyssey Lucas is supposed to have made. A 53-year-old veteran of Newsweek, the Dallas Times-Herald, the Dallas Morning News and ABC's "20/20," Aynesworth had finished a book about convicted serial murderer Theodore Bundy when one of Lucas' attorneys asked whether Aynesworth might be interested in writing about Lucas.

Aynesworth agreed to an initial interview. "I went in thinking that certainly he killed a lot of people," he said. "Maybe not 100, but a lot. God, I

mean they had all those confessions and everything."

In October 1983, as Aynesworth wrote in one of the Times-Herald articles, the two men met for the first time in a Texas jail cell where Lucas was awaiting trial for the murder of his 15-year-old girlfriend. Lucas by that time had told police that he had killed 156 women, but that was not, Aynesworth wrote, what he had to say now.

Lucas said, "I only got three, really," Aynesworth wrote in an account of his own involvement in the case today. "But they're goin' wild every time I tell 'em about some more . . . I'm gonna show 'em. They think I'm stupid, but before all this is over, everyone will know who's really stupid. And we'll see who the real criminals are."

When Aynesworth asked for proof, as their interviews continued, Lucas gave him leads to follow, he says: names of former employers, places he said he had cashed paychecks, relatives and acquaintances he said he had lived with while murders he had confessed to were taking place hundreds of miles away. So Aynesworth set out to see for himself, staying with the story even after the demise in early 1984 of the publishing house that had offered him a book contract. At Lucas' suggestion, he flew to Florida to see whether Lucas had cashed payroll checks at the time he was supposed to have been killing a hitchhiker in Tex-

as; when he found the grocer who had cashed all Lucas' checks for him, Aynesworth wrote, the grocer said no police agency had ever contacted him.

"I guess it was there—with the realization that no reasonable investigation had been made—that I began to believe Lucas' story that the whole thing was a massive hoax," Aynesworth wrote.

Other homicides were attributed to Lucas, the article said, in the face of evidence that showed he could not have been in the places where he was supposed to have committed the crimes: a Texas murder committed on the day Lucas applied for unemployment benefits or food stamps in Illinois; a second Texas murder committed while Lucas was working at a Pennsylvania mushroom farm; a Nevada murder committed on days when records showed he was selling scrap



BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Dallas Times-Herald reporters Jim Henderson, left, and Hugh Aynesworth.

metal in Jacksonville, Fla.

What the stories suggest is that Lucas, driven by a hunger for public attention and a desire to "show how much crookedness there is in law enforcement," as Aynesworth writes Lucas said, was either deliberately or inadvertently coached by many of the police investigators who interrogated him. The stories say Lucas' inventions continued far beyond his original plans when he was told that as long as he kept confessing, he would not be sent to the federal penitentiary, where he was to be executed for the murder of a Texas hitchhiker. The stories say the evidence "strongly suggests that the authorities, particularly the gubernatorial Homicide Task Force headed by Texas Rangers, had information that would have exonerated Lucas from many of the murders, but ignored or failed to pursue leads that would have proven the deceit of his confessions."

The stories suggest, in short, that the Texas lawmen on the Lucas case—some of whom have spent the last two years working with Lucas and adding small pins to the crowded United States wall map that is supposed to illustrate his murder sites—have apparently let Lucas pull off what today's lead article said may be "the largest hoax in law enforcement annals."

"That's an outright lie," said Jim

Boutwell, the county sheriff who runs the small wood-frame jailhouse where Lucas has spent more than a year detailing his alleged crimes to police investigators and visiting reporters. "That's absolutely incorrect. That's just preposterous. Anything we've had that we knew of that we could look at was looked at, to the best of my knowledge. There've been numerous occasions when we've told officers, 'There's no need even talking to him about this case, because he couldn't have been there.'"

"As far as the cases in California were concerned, there just isn't any question in my mind, or the local agencies that we took Lucas to, that Henry is good for those crimes," said Charles E. Casey, the California narcotics enforcement bureau chief who in his former capacity as chief of organized crimes and intelligence brought Lucas out for a 12-day California tour in which Lucas satisfied officials that he had committed at least 15 previously unsolved homicides in the state. "He was very definitive in his knowledge of the locations. He was not led. He was able to identify victims, and he was able to provide details that could only be known to the person who had committed the crime."

Among the particular charges made by Aynesworth, who returned to the Times-Herald staff last February, and Henderson are these:

■ That the Homicide Task Force credited Lucas with a murder in

Douglas County, Nevada, sometime between Feb. 26 and 28, 1981, but that records show Lucas was selling scrap metal in Jacksonville during those days—and that the Task Force never requested those records. Asked about this on Saturday, Boutwell, who stressed that he had been reached at home and had no notes or documents to refer to, said he did not know whether the records had been requested.

■ That to commit the string of late-autumn 1978 murders police investigators tied to Lucas, Lucas would have to have driven "more than 11,000 miles in one month in a 13-year-old Ford station wagon . . . He would have had to have averaged nearly 50 mph even if he had gone

THE WASHINGTON POST

without sleep . . . In addition to leaving no clues at any of those hurriedly executed crimes, he didn't even receive a speeding ticket."

"It's possible," Boutwell said. "First of all, money was not a big problem to him, because he would steal and rob and kill to get it. As far as vehicles were concerned, he was a good mechanic . . . He loved to drive. He lived to drive. This has been verified even by Michigan prison records—the fact that even back then when he was in prison in Michigan [for the murder of his mother] he told counselors about his love for driving."

■ That when Boutwell first interrogated Lucas about the murder of an unidentified hitchhiker found in Texas dressed only in orange socks—the case Boutwell has described as his introduction to Lucas—Lucas is quoted in a transcript as having first told Boutwell, incorrectly, that the woman had been stabbed to death. "Several stab wounds, probably some through her breasts, probably, and some through her chest cavity," the transcript reportedly quoted Lucas as saying.

"That's absolutely wrong," Boutwell said. "I believe he said that, but that was about another case that happened just south of Austin, and that was correct. But that was not about

Orange Socks ... I've got a transcript, and I've got the original tape. 'She would have been a strangle.' Those were his exact words. I never will forget them."

There are numerous other allegations in the articles, most of them painting a picture of investigators determined to link Lucas to crimes regardless of the evidence before them. If Henderson and Aynesworth are right, do they think they understand what happened, or why?

"The biggest, most bizarre story of a lot of good intentions run amok," Henderson said. "It was a snowball that got started, and got bigger and bigger, and nobody wanted to step in front of it."

Dozens of different police jurisdictions? Scores of officers from states all over the country?

"People want to be affiliated with the biggest and the best and the wildest," Aynesworth said. The articles also point out that some jurisdictions wanted nothing to do with Lucas' confessions—that some officers seemed to agree with the California detective who was quoted in the articles as having said, "I told my chief that guy would have admitted to anything. He would have admitted to killing Abraham Lincoln if you asked him to."

"It's no hoax," Boutwell said. "Lucas has not been able to pull a hoax on all these people. He's tried it from time to time. We're kind of like reporters. We're a little bit cynical. We like to see something proven being factual. No man is going to continue to pull a hoax on hundreds of seasoned officers ... I think Aynesworth is going to wind up with a lot of egg on his face on this thing. I'm not too concerned."