

United States Department of Justice

**For Immediate Release**

August 23, 2010 **United States Attorney's Office**  
**District of New Mexico**

## **Arizona Fugitives Charged with Causing the Deaths of Oklahoma Couple**

During a press conference this morning, United States Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales announced that the United States District Court for the District of New Mexico has issued arrest warrants for Arizona fugitives John Charles McCluskey, 45, and Tracy Allen Province, 42, and their accomplice, Casslyn Mae Welch, 44, based on criminal complaints charging them with carjacking Gary and Linda Haas of Oklahoma with the intention of causing their deaths. According to the criminal complaints, on August 2, 2010, McCluskey, Province, and Welch carjacked Mr. and Mrs. Haas and their pickup truck and camping trailer at a rest area off Interstate 40 in Quay County, NM with the intention of murdering the couple. They further allege that McCluskey shot and killed Mr. and Mrs. Haas in the trailer at a location between Santa Rosa and Tucumcari, NM. Thereafter, McCluskey, Province, and Welch drove the Haases' truck and trailer to a remote area in Guadalupe County, NM, where they unhitched, burned, and abandoned the trailer with the Haases' remains still inside. On August 4, 2010, the New Mexico State Police (NMSP) discovered the burned remains of Mr. and Mrs. Haas in the trailer.

The complaints charge that McCluskey, Province, and Welch took a truck and trailer from Gary and Linda Haas by force and violence with the intention of causing their deaths and that Mr. and Mrs. Haases' death resulted from that crime, in violation of 18 U.S.C. §2119. They also charge McCluskey and Province with discharging a firearm while committing a crime of violence for which they may be prosecuted in a federal court, in violation of 18 U.S.C. §924(c)(1)(A)(iii). McCluskey and Province also are charged with causing the death of persons through the use of a firearm while committing a crime of violence for which they may be prosecuted in a federal court, in violation of with 18 U.S.C. §924(j)(1). If convicted of the carjacking offense and/or the death by firearm offense, McCluskey, Province, and Welch could receive a life sentence or the death penalty.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Linda Mott and Shana Pennington and was investigated by the NMSP, the Phoenix and Albuquerque Divisions of the FBI and the United States Marshals Service (USMS) in New Mexico and Arizona. As previously reported, McCluskey, Province, and Welch are in state custody in Arizona. Province was arrested in Wyoming on August 9, 2010, and McCluskey and Welch were arrested in Arizona on August 19, 2010, following a nationwide, multiagency manhunt.

During today's press conference, United States Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said:

This morning, I am announcing that a United States Magistrate Judge signed criminal complaints that charge John Charles McCluskey, Tracy Allen Province, and Casslyn Mae

Welch with the murders of Gary and Linda Haas that occurred on August 2, 2010, here in New Mexico. At the time they committed the murders, McCluskey and Province were fugitives, having escaped from an Arizona prison on July 30, 2010; Welch was the accomplice who is believed to have facilitated their escape.

To put these charges into context, on August 2, 2010, Gary and Linda Haas, both 61, recently retired and in the prime of their life, were traveling from their home in Tecumseh, OK, to Pagosa Springs, CO, where they had vacationed with family and friends for the past 11 summers. They got as far as a rest stop on Interstate 40 in Quay County, New Mexico. After parking their pickup truck and camping trailer at a rest area off Interstate 40 in Quay County, Mr. and Mrs. Haas encountered McCluskey, Province, and Welch. And what happened to Mr. and Mrs. Haas next was unspeakable.

McCluskey, Province and Welch carjacked Mr. and Mrs. Haas and their truck and camping trailer at gunpoint with the intention of murdering the couple. The three drove Mr. and Mrs. Haas to a location between Tucumcari and Santa Rosa, New Mexico where they stopped. There they led Mr. and Mrs. Haas into the Haases' camping trailer, where McCluskey shot and killed them both. McCluskey, Province, and Welch then drove the Haases' truck and trailer, which contained the couple's remains, to a remote location in Guadalupe County, New Mexico where they unhitched the camping trailer and burned it, the Haases' remains still inside.

On August 4, 2010, the Guadalupe County Sheriff and the New Mexico State Police discovered the trailer and the burned remains of Mr. and Mrs. Haas in the trailer. What followed was an intensive and exhaustive investigation led by the New Mexico State Police and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and included the United States Marshals Service, and scores of other federal, state, and local law enforcement from the entire Southwest region. These officers and agents worked tirelessly, working cooperatively across district, state, and county lines to apprehend and bring to justice those who carjacked and murdered Mr. and Mrs. Haas, and to make sure that they did not injure or kill anyone else.

As you already know, as result of the collaborative efforts of the countless law enforcement officers from numerous federal, state and local agencies across the country, McCluskey, Province, and Welch are in custody in Arizona. And based on the outstanding efforts of the NMSP, FBI and USMS, this morning, a United States Magistrate Judge issued federal arrest warrants for McCluskey, Province and Welch for carjacking and murdering Gary and Linda Haas based on criminal complaints.

The arrest warrants issued today are based on three criminal complaints that allege that McCluskey, Province, and Welch took a truck and trailer from Gary and Linda Haas by force and violence with the intention of causing their deaths and that the deaths of Mr. and Mrs. Haas resulted from that crime. The complaints also charge McCluskey, Province, and Welch with discharging a firearm while committing a crime of violence for which they may be prosecuted in a court of the United States. McCluskey, Province, and Welch also are charged with causing the death of persons through the use of a firearm while committing a violent crime that can be prosecuted in federal court. If convicted of

the carjacking offense or the death by firearm offense, McCluskey, Province, and Welch could receive a life sentence or the death penalty.

Yesterday, I spoke with members of the Haas family and offered the condolences of the entire law enforcement community in New Mexico. We can only imagine their grief at this time. I believe that they have taken solace in seeing how the law enforcement community pulled out the stops over the last three weeks to secure arrest warrants for those charged with murdering their parents. To the Haas family and all families out there, please know that we will continue relentlessly to pursue individuals who take lives and endanger citizens through violent means.

I want to thank the men and women of the New Mexico State Police, the FBI, the U.S. Marshals Service, the other members of the New Mexico law enforcement community, and the numerous other law enforcement agencies across the nation who participated in the investigation of this case and the nationwide manhunt that put McCluskey, Province, and Welch back in custody. Special gratitude goes to Richard Flores, the District Attorney for the 4th Judicial District of the State of New Mexico, and his team, whose cooperation helped make these federal charges possible, as well as the community of Santa Rosa for embracing and caring for the Haas family following the tragic deaths of their loved ones.

As I conclude, I want to remind everyone that: a complaint is merely an allegation and is not evidence of guilt. These defendants are presumed innocent and are entitled to a fair trial in which it will be the government's burden to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

Carol K. O. Lee, Special Agent in Charge of the Albuquerque Division of the FBI said:

Today's announcement demonstrates the effectiveness of interagency law enforcement cooperation. I call special attention to the relentless pursuit of justice by the State Police. Likewise, the United States Marshals Service rapidly brought to bear enormous resources from multiple states. And finally, within hours of the fugitives' capture, FBI Phoenix and Albuquerque had teams at the scene looking for evidence