104-10054-10430

S E C R E T

23 May 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: DC/OPS

SUBJECT : Review of Selected Items in the Lee Harvey OSWALD File Regarding Allegations of the CASTRO Cuban Involvement in the John F. KENNEDY Assassination

1. The attached review and summary was written at the express request of Mr. David W. Belin as a follow-up to Question 3 of his letter to the Agency of 15 April 1975.

2. The results - as I have already told him - add nuance, not evidence, to what the Warren Commission and its staff had laid before them in 1964 on this subject. The results of the review are stipulated in paragraph 8 of the Attachment. There seemed to be no reason to attach copies of the case reports from the file to this summary. These can be made available promptly, however, on request. This summary does not deal with press, magazine and books that dealt with the subject during the period after the assassination.

3. My recommendation is to do with this paper as we did with the earlier one requested by Mr. Belin on the unidentified man: let him read the entire summary and then decide how much of it, if any, is pertinent

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to his and the Commission's needs and then decide how much will go into the classified record.

Raymond G. Rocca

Attachment

SUBJECT : Review of Selected Items in the Lee Harvey OSWALD File Regarding Allegations of CASTRO Cuban Involvement in the John F. KENNEDY Assassination

REFERENCE : Letter by David W. Belin to Mr. E. Henry Knoche, 15 April 1975, paragraph 3 (Regarding Public Statement by CASTRO, etc.), attached

BACKGROUND

1. On Saturday evening, 7 September 1963, Fidel CASTRO appeared at a Brazilian Embassy reception in Havana; even more unusual, CASTRO submitted to an informal interview by the Associated Press correspondent, Daniel HARKER.

2. HARKER's interview reached New York on Sunday, 8 September, and was in print throughout the country on Monday, 9 September. There can be no question from the facts surrounding the CASTRO appearance, which had not been expected, and his agreement to the interview, that this event represented a more-than-ordinary attempt to get a message on the record in the United States.

3. CASTRO's statements to HARKER covered a range of topics but dealt principally with American political leadership, in particular President KENNEDY, whom he excoriated in extraordinarily provocative fashion (" ... KENNEDY is a cretin;" ... the BATISTA of his times ... the most opportunistic American President of all time ...").

4. The interview also contained an uncomplimentary reference to Senator GOLDWATER and Cuban delay in signing the limited nuclear test ban. There were differences in the replay by United States newspapers like the New York Times and Washington papers, with a result that CASTRO's "message" was significantly modulated.

5. In New Orleans, where Lee Harvey OSWALD resided until the middle of September 1963, the HARKER story appeared in the principal morning paper, the Times-Picayune, on Monday, 9 September, page 7, under a three-column headline: "CASTRO Blasts Raids on Cuba. Says U.S. Leaders Imperiled by Aid to Rebels." The story followed under the HARKER by-line:

> "Havana (AP) - Prime Minister Fidel Castro said Saturday night: 'U.S. leaders would be in danger if they helped in any attempt to do away with leaders of Cuba.'

"Bitterly denouncing what he called recent U.S. prompted raids on Cuban territory, Castro said: 'We are prepared to fight them and answer in kind. U.S. leaders should think that if they are aiding terrorist plans to eliminate Cuban leaders, they themselves will not be safe.'

" ... World affairs ... seemed to be entering a more peaceful climate a few days ago, but now this trend has changed with attacks.

"'The U.S. is always ready to negotiate and make promises which later it will not honor. This has happened to promises made during the October crisis. They have been broken as can be seen with new attacks.

"'But I warn this is leading to a very dangerous situation that could lead to a worse crisis than October's ...'"

6. The New York Times, in its coverage on 9 September, used a UPI wire service report which omitted any reference to the warning and threat which gave the interview its real significance. The Washington Post did an abbreviated rewrite (9 September, page A-7) which, similarly, omitted any reference to the main thrust of CASTRO's remarks.

The Evening Star of Washington, D. C., printed the HARKER story nearly in its entirety in the second section of the paper (9 September 1963, page B-4) and reworded the content of the HARKER interview, placing the emphasis on the political aspects - in particular, highlighting the GOLDWATER elements and burying CASTRO's warning to the United States leadership in the middle of the piece.

7. There is no evidence in the files on the KENNEDY assassination that this CASTRO interview was considered in following up leads or in dealings with the Warren Commission and its staff although Mexico Station specifically directed Headquarters attention to the AP story very shortly after the Dallas killing. More important, the interview appears to have been forgotten in the contemporary political consideration of relations with CASTRO's Cuba. There is no evidence in the Agency records, either, that the Warren Commission staff itself pursued the implication of the CASTRO interview in dealing with the conspiracy hypothesis. There is no evidence in the files that anything along these lines was stated by any other Cuban leader before the assassination.

8. The purpose of this review, undertaken at Mr. Belin's request, is to reconsider Lee Harvey OSWALD's activity on the assumption that as an avid newspaper reader - which we know from testimony of Marina OSWALD and others - he read the CASTRO warning and threat as reported above. The results

of the review, admittedly heavily using the 20---20 quality of hindsight, may be stipulated in summary:

a. There is no increment of credible evidence, applying this phrase strictly, of Soviet and/or Cuban political, intelligence or security service involvement in the assassination to what was developed and considered by the Warren Commission and its staff. The Commission's finding that Lee Harvey OSWALD was the killer of President KENNEDY and Officer TIPPIT and did them in alone and of his own determination stands.

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b. "Credible evidence" that would upset or significantly modify this judgement did (and does) not exist in Washington. But such evidence could exist in Moscow and/or Havana, whose voluntary inputs to the Warren Commission were minimal in quantity and quality, designed to cover up any admissions of knowledge of, or connection with, OSWALD which might be related directly or indirectly with the assassination. Therefore, the belief that there was Soviet and/or Cuban (KGB and/or DGI) connection with OSWALD will persist and

grow until there has been a full disclosure by these governments of all elements of OSWALD's handling and stay in the Soviet Union and his contacts in Mexico City. The Warren Commission report should have left a wider "window" for this contingency. That, indeed, was the opinion at the working level, particularly in the counterintelligence component in the CIA in 1964. As was indicated by Mr. Helms in his testimony before the Warren Commission, CIA would continue to regard this aspect of the OSWALD case as still open.[1]

c. In the absence of additional or new elements of "credible" evidence, there are "nuances" in the record that emerge as noteworthy, in the light of other conclusions. These are reviewed and summarized below, item-by-item.

d. CASTRO's warning and threat of 7 September 1963 - if OSWALD did indeed read

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[1] Investigation of the Assassination of President John F. KENNEDY. Hearings Before the President's Commission on the Assassination of President KENNEDY (Washington, 1964), hereafter cited as Hearings, Vol. V., pp. 120 - 129. See especially p. 124 - "Mr. Helms: 'Yes. I would assume the case could never be closed.'"

it in New Orleans - must be considered of great significance in the light of the pathological evolution of OSWALD's passive/aggressive makeup after his attempt to kill General WALKER early in April 1963 and his identification with Fidel CASTRO and the Cuban revolution which is directly traceable as far back as his Marine Corps service in El Toro, California. CASTRO's warning and threat, given to AP correspondent HARKER, irrespective of whether there was any formal mandate, or even security service contact with OSWALD by the Cubans or the Russians - was an act of singular irresponsibility and under no circumstances was excusable as retorsion for what the Cuban emigres were doing during the summer of 1963.

CUBAN CONTACT WITH LEE HARVEY OSWALD, SANTA ANA, CALIFORNIA, EARLY 1959 (?)

9. The testimony of Nelson DELGADO contains an assertion of germinal significance to any review of the background of Lee Harvey OSWALD's feeling toward and relations with CASTRO's Cuba. DELGADO was probably the closest peer group

member to OSWALD during his specialist training period at El Toro Marine Corps Base December 1958 - September 1959. The Warren Commission Report takes note of this:

> "OSWALD told DELGADO that he was in touch with Cuban diplomatic officials in this country, which DELGADO at first took to be 'one of his lies, but later believed.'"[2]

10. Actually DELGADO's testimony says a lot more of possible operational significance than is reflected by the language of the report, and its implications do not appear to have been run down or developed by investigation. Thus, the record of the beginning of OSWALD's relationship with the Cubans starts with a question mark.

11. The period was one of transition in U.S. - Cuban relations after CASTRO's takeover. OSWALD, and DELGADO at the outset, were CASTRO supporters, OSWALD being particularly keen about how to get to the island. DELGADO testified:

> " ... I didn't know what to tell him, so I told him the best thing that I know was to

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2 Report to the President's Commission on the Assassination of President John F. KENNEDY (Washington, 1964), hereafter cited as Report, p. 687.

get in touch with a Cuban Embassy, you know. But at that time that I told him this - we were on friendly terms with Cuba, you know, so this wasn't no subversion or malintent, you know. I didn't know what to answer him. I told him to see them.

"After a while he told me he was in contact with them ...

" ... I seen this envelope in his foot-locker, wall-locker, and it was addressed to him, and they had an official seal on it, and as far as I could recollect that was mail from Los Angeles, and he was telling me there was a Cuban Consul. And just after he started receiving these letters - you see, he would never go out, but stay near the post all the time ...

" ... he had one visitor after he started receiving letters he had one visitor. It was a man, because I got the call from the MP guard shack, and they gave me a call that OSWALD had a visitor at the front gate. This man had to be a civilian, otherwise they would have let him in. So I had to find somebody to relieve OSWALD, who was on guard, to go down

there to visit with this fellow, and they spent about an hour and a half, two hours, talking, I guess, and he came back. I don't know who the man was or what they talked about, but he looked nonchalant about the whole thing when he came back. He never mentioned who he was, nothing.

"Mr. LIEBELER: How long did he talk to him, do you remember?

"Mr. DELGADO : About an hour and half, two hours ...

"Mr. LIEBELER: You never asked OSWALD who this fellow was that he talked to?

"Mr. DELGADO : No. No ...

"Mr. LIEBELER: Did you connect this visit that OSWALD had at that time with the Cuban Consulate?

"Mr. DELGADO : I did; because I thought it funny for him to be receiving a caller at such a late date - time. Also, up to this time he hardly ever received mail; in fact he seldom received mail from home because I made it a policy, I used to pick up the mail for our unit and distribute it to the guys in there, and very seldom did I ever see one for him. But every so often, after he started to get in contact with

these Cuban people, he started getting letter pamphlets and newspapers ...

" ... and he also started receiving letters, you know, and no books, maybe pamphlets, you know, little-like church, things we get from church, you know, but it wasn't a church.

"Mr. LIEBELER: Were they written in Spanish, any of them, do you know?

"Mr. DELGADO : Not that I can recall, no.

"Mr. LIEBELER: Did you have any reason to believe that these things came to OSWALD from the Cuban Consulate?

"Mr. DELGADO : Well, I took it for granted that they did after I seen the envelope, you know ... something like a Mexican eagle, with a big, impressive seal, you know. They had different colors on it, red and white; almost looked like our colors, you know. But I can't recall the seal. I just knew it was in Latin, United, something like that. I couldn't understand. It was Latin.

"Mr. LIEBELER: You don't know for sure whether it was from the Cuban Consulate?

"Mr. DELGADO : No. But he had told me prior, just before I found that envelope in his wall locker, that he was receiving mail from them, and one time he offered to show it to me, but I wasn't much interested because at the time we had work to do, and I never did ask to see that paper again, you know.

"Mr. LIEBELER: Did he tell you what his correspondence with the Cuban Consulate was about?

"Mr. DELGADO : No, he didn't.

"Mr. LIEBELER: Did he ever indicate to you that it had to do with the conversations that you had about going over to Cuba?

"Mr. DELGADO : No. The only thing he told me was that right after he had this conversation with the Cuban people was that he was going to - once he got out of the service - he was going to Switzerland ... "[3]

12. OSWALD's application to Albert Schweitzer College, Churwalden, Switzerland, was dated 19 March 1959, and he was presumably to report there on 20 April 1960. Destined for discharge from the Marines on 7 December 1959, OSWALD

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[3] Hearings, Volume VIII, pp. 241 - 243.

accelerated his exit on grounds of family hardship in early September 1959. On 27 September 1959 he was issued a U.S. passport valid for travel - among other places to Cuba and the USSR. He entered the Soviet Union from Finland on 15 October 1959.

13. DELGADO's testimony has the cast of credibility. Granting that, it is of basic importance to focus attention on the male visitor who contacted OSWALD at El Toro Camp and talked with him for between one and a half to two hours. The event was unique in DELGADO's recollections, and actually there is nothing like it - on the record - in everything else we know about OSWALD's activity in the United States before or after his return to the United States. The record reflects no identification of the El Toro contact. DELGADO's presumption is that he was from the Cuban Consulate in Los Angeles. Assuming that, the questions are: Who was it, and was there reporting from Los Angeles to Washington and Havana that could, in effect, represent the opening of a Cuban file on OSWALD?[4]

"PREDICTION" OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY'S DEMISE BY COMMUNIST PARTY CELL LEADER MORSE BENITEZ ZABOLA, 1962

14. Guatemala Station forwarded to Headquarters on 9 January 1964 a duplicate copy of a raw report by a

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[4] U.S./Cuban diplomatic and consular relations were severed on 3 January 1961.

penetration dated 5 January 1962 describing events at the yearly Communist Party cell meeting. The cell leader, Morse BENITEZ Zabola, said that the Communist Party in Guatamala should form a single new party; "We need not preoccupy ourselves over the politics of President KENNEDY because we know, according to prognostications, that he will die within the present year, 1962."

15. This report apparently had been discounted when it was received and was not forwarded until the Station re-reviewed all of its material after the assassination. The file reflects no follow-up or formal dissemination of the report.

ENIGMATIC THREATS BY CUBAN THIRD SECRETARY IN THE HAGUE, 7 NOVEMBER 1963

16. A sensitive [redacted] source, reporting after the KENNEDY assassination, indicated that at the Soviet reception on 7 November 1963, the Cuban Third Secretary, Ricardo L. SANTOS Pesa, discussed the recent refugee raids on Cuba and their implications with a host-country diplomat, concluding with the admonition: " ... Just wait and you will see what we can do. It will happen soon." Asked to be more specific what would happen soon, SANTOS replied: "Just wait, just wait."

17. These data were passed to the Warren Commission by memorandum, 31 March 1964. SANTOS was reported to have

a history of medical instability and was summarily recalled from The Hague reportedly for reasons related to that fact in April 1966.

INTERCEPTED CONVERSATION OF CUBAN EMBASSY EMPLOYEE, LUISA CALDERON, AFTERNOON OF 22 NOVEMBER 1963

18. At 1730 Mexico City time, about five hours after the KENNEDY assassination, a Cuban Embassy employee named "Luisa" received a telephone call in Spanish from an unidentified male outside.

19. The caller asked her if she had heard the latest news. "Luisa" jokingly replied: "Yes, of course, I knew it almost before KENNEDY ... Imagine, one, two, three and now, that makes three [she laughs], what barbarians! ..."

20. Both speakers agreed on the seriousness of the assassination. "Luisa" also stated that the party at Silvia DURAN's had been called off so it would not appear that they were celebrating the death of KENNEDY, nor would they have the party coincide with the burial. Finally she said she planned to move that night into the house of a doctor (a woman) friend.

21. Latin hyperbole? Boastful ex post facto suggestion of foreknowledge? This is the only item in the intercept coverage of the Cubans and Soviets after the assassination that contains the suggestion of foreknowledge or expectation.

22. The tenuous, enignmatic character of the conversation is sharply highlighted by the following facts:

a. "Luisa" was probably identical with Luisa CALDERON, a cadre worker of the Cuban Directorate General of Intelligence (DGI). She returned to Cuba in 1964 and was reported to be working in DGI Headquarters.

b. The DGI element in Mexico City in the fall of 1963 was headed by Alfredo MIRABEL Diaz who had arrived on 2 September 1963, formally as the replacement of the Consul Eusebio AZCUE (departed 19 November 1963). The deputy DGI chief (and as of June 1964, MIRABEL's successor) was Manuel Engenio VEGA Perez.

c. The "Silvia DURAN" named in Luisa's conversation was the receptionist, a Mexican national, who dealt with OSWALD during his known visits on 27 and 28 September to the Cuban installations in connection with a Cuban visa application for stay and/or transit. Silvia DURAN is the sole live witness on the record regarding OSWALD's activity in Mexico City. Her testimony, however, in its entirety was taken and presented, solely, by the Mexican Governmental authorities. A direct

confrontation with her was requested by the Warren Commission staff but rejected by the Mexican authorities. It is from Silvia DURAN's statements that it was learned that OSWALD became engaged in a personal altercation on 27 September with Eusebio AZCUE.

d. Manuel Engenio VEGA Perez, alias Marcos, and his DGI assistant, Rogelis RODRIGUEZ Lopez, were positively identified in February 1964 by two independent sources as engaged in the active development and facilitation of the training of Nicaraguan agents for the purpose of assassinating General Annstasio SOMOZA. VEGA, it is established, was on post in Mexico City during OSWALD's stay there 27 September - 2 October 1963. He left Mexico City on 3 November 1963 for Havana. It was reliably reported about VEGA that all individuals going to Cuba, legally or illegally, had to pass through him first. He took the biographical data and sent it to Cuba for name checking, a procedure which normally took fifteen days.[5]

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[5] For example, VEGA would have handled the details of the visa action and facilitation of the trip to Cuba via Mexico City from 28 December 1962 - 21 January 1963 that

23. There is no evidence in the OSWALD case file that Silvia DURAN was subjected to a systematic elicitative interrogation that would have related her dealings with OSWALD, known or confirmed by intercept, with the data held on the Cuban DGI, its personalities and methods, in Mexico City. Was it normal for a case like OSWALD's, considering the fuss he allegedly made with AZCUE, for the applications to be handled solely by a local employee and a lame duck like AZCUE whose slot had been taken by the DGI chief? Whatever the answer to these questions, they were not asked at the time. And there remains the more fundamental question: accepting the DURAN story on its face, could it have happened without the knowledge and participation of the DGI personnel above cited? This seems unlikely especially because VEGA is later cited by a Cuban DGI defector as having stated he was aware OSWALD made several visits to the Cuban Consulate. It is clear CASTRO's overseas intelligence and security service could have more in its files than was surfaced in the DURAN

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was taken by Vincent Theodore LEE, the organizer of the Fair Play Committee for Cuba, with which OSWALD established relations from Dallas during the period 19 April - 2 November 1963. There is an overlap between LEE's and VEGA's travels to Havana during that period: VEGA departed Mexico City on 6 January for Havana and returned on 13 February 1963.

statements. Coming back to the beginning: "Luisa" - Luisa CALDERON - as a member of the DGI unit in Mexico City - could very well have known something that would make what she said to her unidentified caller less a matter of boastful self-indulgence than was assumed at the time.

SILVIA DURAN, SUBSTANTIAL AMPLIFICATION OF ADMISSION OF ALLEGED PERSONAL RELATIONS WITH LEE HARVEY OSWALD, 1967

24. The defects viewed in hindsight of the Silvia DURAN testimony already have been suggested above. (In that context of criticism it would also be relevant to reconsider the implications of the two intercepted telephone conversations on 26 November 1963 between the Cuban President, DORTICOS, and his Ambassador to Mexico, Joaquim Hernandez ARMAS, because the thrust of the conversation dealt with the question whether Silvia DURAN had been asked about [or been offered?] money payments by her Mexican interrogators.)

25. As of September 1964 Silvia DURAN gave up her Cuban Embassy job. In the spring of 1967 Silvia DURAN was reported by a reliable and sensitive source to have cut all relations with Cubans. Her account, in 1967, of how she had been taken into custody and had been interrogated after the assassination repeated what was already known. She added, under circumstances that did not permit the source to challenge or elicit corroborative detail, that

she had gone out with OSWALD during his stay in Mexico City and claimed she had sexual relations with him.

ALLEGATIONS OF CONSPIRATORIAL CONTACT BETWEEN OSWALD AND CUBAN GOVERNMENT AGENTS WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO ALLEGATIONS OF (A) ELENA GARRO DE PRAZ AND (B) OSCAR CONTRERAS

26. As the Warren Commission reported, "Literally dozens of allegations of a conspiratorial contact between OSWALD and agents of the Cuban Government have been investigated ..."[6] Among these cases, which consumed hundreds of CIA man-hours in Headquarters and abroad - and similarly the FBI in the United States - was the Nicaraguan walkin in Mexico City, 26 November 1963, Gilberto ALVARADO Ugarte.

27. The ALVARADO case is taken up in detail by the Warren Commission under the cryptograph "D."[7] ALVARADO claimed that he had seen an American, whom he identified as OSWALD, receive money some time in mid-September 1963 in a meeting in a patio of the Cuban Consulate in

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6 See Report, p. 305 ff. Some of the others were the cases of Ylario ROJAS Villenueve in Cozumel and Guadaloupe, the allegations of Enrique Ruedolo GONGORA in New York City, the claims of Robert Edward GALLANT, Santa Clara Prison Farm, California, and the allegations of Ray DOBKIN's.

7 See Report, pp. 307 - 308.

Mexico city. ALVARADO's story was ultimately broken by the use of the polygraph, on which ALVARADO showed evidences of deception, and by bringing ALVARADO's former Nicaraguan security service control into the case.

28. The ALVARADO story is a particularly acute representation of the difficulties that beset the evaluation of observed evidence: certain elements of the story persist despite the impeachment of its major premises. ALVARADO, whose account did not become public until the release of the Warren Report in October 1964, talked consistently of the presence in the Cuban Consulate transaction of a Negro with red-dyed hair.

29. Elena GARRO de Paz is a mecurial, articulate and socially prominent Mexican writer, married, but separated from a high-ranking Mexican foreign service official. She is also the cousin of Horacio DURAN, the husband of Silvia DURAN, cited above. There is a strong personal antipathy between the two women descending from Elena GARRO's trenchant anti-Communism.

30. From October 1964 until his retirement in the fall of 1969, a U.S. Embassy officer, Charles THOMAS, persistently kept up a stream of reports and memoranda reflecting GARRO's account of what had actually gone on between OSWALD, the Cubans and in particular Silvia DURAN in September 1963, including a repeated reference to a Negro with red-dyed hair.

31. The first reference to the GARRO story was noted in a Mexico Station Memorandum of Record dated 12 October 1964:

> "Elena GARRO [said] that she and her daughter were invited to a party at the Cuban Embassy during the period she now finds out that OSWALD was here in Mexico prior to the assassination. She was invited by a Mexican secretary in the Cuban Embassy whose husband is a cousin of the GARRO family [Horacio DURAN]. At the party she saw three Gringos, not drinking, not mixing and more or less just standing around together like three bumps on a log. They were so obviously out of place that she asked someone in the Cuban Embassy about them and was told that 'they were just passing through.' She claims that on the way these three Gringos stood out she took a good look at them as did her daughter. When the assassination occurred and OSWALD's picture was spread into the newspapers, both Elena and her daughter immediately said that he was one of the three Gringos 'without a doubt' at the party."

32. GARRO repeated her story to Mr. Charles William THOMAS, an Embassy political officer on 10 December 1965:

In September 1963 after her return from abroad, she went to a party, accompanied by her daughter, at the home of Ruben DURAN [emphasis added]. Ruben is one of the two brothers of Horacio DURAN, who married her cousin. She met OSWALD and two other young Americans. At the party she was discouraged from talking with him. Other guests were the Cuban Consul AZCUE, General Clark FLORES, Silvia DURAN, who she later learned was OSWALD's mistress while he was here, Emilio CARBALLIDO and a Latin American Negro man with red hair [emphasis added]. In November 1963 when the identity of the assassin became known, she and her daughter went to the Cuban Embassy and shouted "assassins" and other insults at the staff there.[8] Shortly afterward, she and her daughter were visited by a friend, Manuel CARVILLO [or CALVILLO], then an official in the Secretariat of the Gobernacion and were told he had orders to escort them to a small and obscure hotel in the center of town. They were kept there for eight days under pretext that they were in danger. When she told CARVILLO she wanted to go to the American Embassy and explain what she knew of OSWALD, she was told that the American Embassy was full of Communist spies.

33. On 25 December 1965 and 9 January 1966 in further interviews with THOMAS, GARRO and her daughter elaborated and

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[8] These particulars were not confirmed by independent observers at the time.

in certain particulars significantly modified her earlier account. She also acknowledged that she and her daughter had been interviewed by Embassy officers to whom she claimed they did not give a very complete story because the Embassy officers did not appear to give much credence to anything they said.

34. It developed that GARRO and daughter had been interviewed by the Legal Attache on 17 and 24 November 1964. Her information had been similar to what she claimed in her account to THOMAS but had not been substantiated by inquiries. The FBI representative therefore considered the matter closed and reaffirmed his disengagement from the matter to the CIA Chief of Station on 27 December 1964 and to the Ambassador on 25 February 1965.

35. The Embassy Political Officer, however, persisted in his interviews and reporting. In a memorandum of conversation, 13 July 1966, GARRO identified the place to which she had been taken by CALVILLO as the Hotel Vermont. (This detail checked out affirmatively. GARRO was at the Hotel 23 - 24, 25 - 27 and 28 - 30 November 1963.) In another, on 7 February 1967, GARRO's continuing vicissitudes with the Cubans are set out. And finally, upon THOMAS's retirement from U.S. Government service, the Department of State, at his request, 28 August 1969, disseminated to CIA and FBI a compilation of his reporting of the Elena GARRO interviews.

36. There the matter rests. GARRO's chronology of the events she described as having occurred in the Mexican capital in September 1963 never coincided with the confirmed data of OSWALD's presence there. Her story, however, had two points congruant with allegations by others regarding OSWALD:

a. ALVARADO's allegations regarding the Negro with the red-dyed hair [this detail could, however, have been gleaned from the Warren Commission's published account of the "D" case] and

b. Silvia DURAN's later claim of intimate personal contacts with OSWALD.

37. Beginning in March and amplified in May 1967, the American Consul, Benjamin J. RUYLE, in Tampico developed a contact with a local Mexican journalist, Oscar CONTRERAS Lartigue, who claimed to have encountered OSWALD with other pro-CASTRO students at the University of Mexico campus in September 1963.

38. In June 1969 CONTRERAS was interviewed by a CIA officer:

> He studied law at the University of Mexico for three years, approximately 1960 - 1964. He belonged to a clandestine pro-CASTRO revolutionary group at the University. Regarding the OSWALD

case he was extremely cautious and although he was not able or willing to give dates and names, he said OSWALD visited the University of Mexico campus shortly after the Cuban Embassy refused him a visa to visit Cuba. OSWALD made inquiries regarding pro-Cuban revolutionary groups at the University and was directed to CONTRERAS and his friend. OSWALD met CONTRERAS and four other persons as they came out of a round-table discussion held in the faculty of Philosophy. OSWALD told the group it was urgent that he visit Cuba and the Cuban Embassy had denied him a visa. He requested aid from CONTRERAS' group. CONTRERAS and others mistrusted OSWALD because they felt he was a CIA provocation. The group allowed OSWALD to accompany them the rest of the day, that night and part of the next day. OSWALD was very introverted and appeared to be slightly crazy. OSWALD made no mention of an assassination plot but kept bringing up the point he had to travel to Cuba immediately.

39. At this point, with FBI knowledge, the matter was turned over to the Mexican authorities who determined that CONTRERAS was indeed at the University of Mexico but only

for the years 1959 - 1960 and that he had been publicly associated in protest activity for the Student Revolutionary Bloc (BER) in January 1961. However, the group ceased functioning as such in the middle of 1962, and Oscar CONTRERAS was never one of its leaders. No further work is reflected in the files on the CONTRERAS allegations. Apart from the unsustained claims made by CONTRERAS about his own presence at the University, there is an additional element that undermines the credibility of his account: OSWALD's Spanish, which was barely adequate to get him meals near the hotel, seems hardly likely to have permitted him to carry on for an extended period with a University student group.