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GARRO DE PAZ, ELENA

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①  
On October 5, 1964, eleven days after the publication of the Warren Commission Report, a story alleging Lee Harvey Oswald's presence at a party in Mexico City attended by Cuban government personnel came to the attention of the Central Intelligence Agency (W x 747, p. 94, City # 430, CIA # 721; Bhick Memo dated 10/5/64, CIA # 576).

An allegation, of this type, if true, would negate the Warren Commission's conclusion that Lee Harvey Oswald was the lone assassin of John F. Kennedy.

Elena's Story As Reported October 5, 1964

Elena Garro de Paz  
and Daba Garro de Guerrero Salvan, first cousins of Horacio, Ruben and ~~Sylvia~~ <sup>Ignacio</sup> Duran were invited to a twist party at the home of Ruben Duran in the middle of a week in the fall of 1963. Lee Harvey Oswald was alleged to have been at this party in the company of "two other beatnik looking boys." (Ibid) <sup>The Americans</sup> When Elena remained together the entire evening and did not dance. When Elena tried to speak with the Americans, she was "shifted" to another room by one of her cousins. [The memo does not state whether Elena had mentioned which cousin <sup>had</sup> ~~did~~ not allowed her to speak to the Americans.] One of Elena's cousins told her at the time that (he or she) did not know who the Americans were except that Sylvia Duran (<sup>an employee at the Cuban Embassy and the wife of</sup> Horacio Duran), had brought them to the party.

The day after the party, Elena and Daba saw the three Americans on the Insurgentes, a main avenue in Mexico City. The Garro's claimed that they had recognized Oswald's photograph when it was published after the assassination. Sylvia Duran's arrest "underlined <sup>the Garro's</sup> their certainty" that the man had been Lee Harvey Oswald. (Ibid)

Daba added that Ignacio and one of the Duran brothers had made trips to Texas. <sup>(Ibid)</sup> She added that, even though

2

the Duan brothers had always been poor before the assassination, they were both driving expensive new cars. (ibid)

The source of the memo was a <sup>w.H.I.A.T</sup> Central Intelligence Agency ~~asset~~ known by the cryptonym LICOOKIE I whom the Committee identified as June Cobb Sharp while reviewing LICOOKIE'S file.

According to Elena

Ms. Cobb was sent to <sup>her</sup> ~~Elena's~~ house, <sup>shortly after the assassination</sup> for a few days, by a mutual friend, Costa Rican writer Eunice Odio. [CIA No's 580-583; WX-7241, Entry # 427, p. 92, CIA # 719] While ~~Ms. Cobb was~~ <sup>Ms. Garro asserted that</sup>

at <sup>her</sup> Elena's house <sup>Ms. Cobb</sup> she expressed interest in the Kennedy assassination. One night Elena's sister Deba who was visiting got drunk and <sup>told the whole story</sup> ~~the story was~~. (ibid) Claiming to be

a CIA agent, Cobb suggested that Elena and Deba go to Texas to tell their story. (ibid) <sup>Elena stated that</sup> When <sup>Cobb's</sup> ~~her~~ suggestion was rejected, Cobb stated that she would arrange a meeting with the CIA Station Chief. [Winston Scott was the Mexico City Station Chief in 1964].

The meeting did not occur because Ms. Cobb was asked to leave the Garro house evidently because she kicked Elena's cat. [CIA No's 580-583; WX-7241, Entry # 427, p. 92, CIA # 719] A notation on the memo says that L/I (Licookie I) never regained contact with Elena Garro de Pay. [WX-7241, p. 94, Entry # 430, CIA # 721; Blind Memo dated 10/5/64, CIA # 576].

The Licookie memo was not inserted in either the Elena Garro or Lee Harvey Oswald "p" (personality) files but in a <sup>local informant and Cuban</sup> project file. <sup>The memo was placed in the</sup> ~~The Committee was not given~~ <sup>the memo was placed</sup> ~~the project file~~ <sup>it was filed</sup>. The Committee learned about the memo from WX-7241, a chronological history of the Oswald case prepared by Anne Dorfman for

local informant and Cuban project file.

the CIA in 1976] The memo was found in December, 1965. [The Committee CIA # 721.] Stanley Watson found the memo ~~not been able to determine~~ <sup>who found</sup> ~~by whom.~~ The memo a marginal notation on WX 7241 says, "Why was this not sent to Headquarters?" (p. 87, CIA # 714). The Committee has ~~not been able to determine what action was taken forwarded to headquarters shortly thereafter.~~ <sup>that the memo was</sup> ~~when the memo was found in December 1965.~~

(3)

### Biography

The story was ~~written~~ <sup>told by</sup> ~~who~~ Elena Garro de Paz, was born of Spanish parents in Puebla, Mexico on December 11, 1917. Ms. Garro attended the National Autonomous University of Mexico and later did graduate work at Berkley in California and at the University of Paris. In 1963, Elena had long been married to Octavio Paz, a career diplomat who is also one of Mexico's finest poets and leading intellectuals. When Octavio was named Mexican Ambassador to India, the couple separated by mutual consent. Elena's daughter, also named Elena, has always resided with her mother.

[All information in this section culled from Biography Data form prepared by Charles Thomas]

Since Elena spent seventeen years of her early life in Europe she had a rather un-Mexican objectivity about her native land and had a reputation for being one of its more articulate detractors. At the same time, Elena was considered emotionally committed to many aspects of Mexican life and made an important contribution to its artistic development.

In the 1960's Elena became a significant writer. Hogar Solido, El Rey Mago, La Senora en su Balcon, Ventura Allende, Andaise por las Ramas, Parada Empresa, and El Viaje are plays that have had appreciative audiences in Europe, where they were translated into German, as well as in Mexico. Ms. Garro's short stories are collected in a volume called La Semana de Colores. The Literacy Supplement of the London Times has called her novel, Los Recuerdos de Porvenir, "a

splendid success." Critics have said of her: "For Elena Garro, there is no frontier between reality and fantasy; in any case, the latter is a second reality-- perhaps more intense-- to which one may penetrate without passport or forewarning, thanks to the effectiveness of a literature fired with passion, flavor and life." [ Many people who knew Elena have asserted that the frontier between reality and fantasy is also difficult for her to distinguish in real life. [Biography Data Form <sup>on Elena Garro de Az</sup> prepared by Charles Thomas] ]

Ms. Garro, for many years, was an active worker in the Confederacion Nacional Campesina (CNC), the agrarian arm of the Partido Reformista (PRI). Because Ms. Garro was a tireless propagandist and agitator on behalf of the poorer Mexican peasants, she was on close personal terms with and enjoyed the respect of peasant leaders from all over the country. (ibid)

Elena was considered a witty, urbane and opinionated woman with an unflagging sense of humor. Her forthright opinions and sharp wit tended on occasion to ruffle feathers in Mexico, but her important social, literacy, and political connections rendered her fairly immune from serious counter-attack until 1968. Then, Ms. Garro was forced to flee the country with her daughter, Elenita and her sister, Deba Guerrero de Galvan, in the midst of the student strikes. The House select committee on Assassinations has been unable to determine the exact reason Ms. Garro had for fleeing Mexico.

Before her disappearance from Mexico, Elena was well disposed toward the United States and had been friendly with Embassy officers. Her broad range of significant personal friends, the views of many important to the American Embassy, made her a useful Embassy target. Throughout the early 1960's she was carried as a target in the Embassy's Youth Program.

American Embassy employees dealing with Elena believed that despite her access to the underground happenings in Mexico, ~~including peasant unrest, since she had a~~ <sup>her</sup> tendency to romanticize ~~developments in reporting on them~~ <sup>while she reported, frequently</sup> made it difficult ~~at times to determine what degree of credence~~ <sup>to evaluate her overall credibility.</sup> to place on what might truly be useful and concrete information.

→ [ A "useful Embassy target" is a person deemed important ~~because~~ <sup>because of acquaintances</sup> enough by ~~American Embassy officials~~ to merit frequent contact, either witting or unwitting, ~~with American Embassy officials~~ ]

6

October 12, 1964 CIA MEMO FOR THE RECORD

On 10/12/64 the Chief of Covert Action, <sup>Jim</sup>~~John~~ Flannery, wrote a memo for the record regarding that Elena Garro de Paz had told her story to Eunice Odio [The Committee has not been able to determine if Elena Garro told Ms. Odio <sup>the story</sup> personally or if Ms. Cobb <sup>related to</sup> told Ms. Odio what Elena had told her.] who relayed it to "Tichborn" [~~Wagoner~~ <sup>Tichborn was</sup> Henry P. Togg's cryptonym. Ms. Togg was a willing asset [for the CIA] who wrote propaganda pieces. After careful review of his CIA file, the HSCA has not been able to establish a link from Ms. Togg to Ms. Odio or ~~to~~ Ms. Garro. ]

on 10/9/64. [10/12/64 memo, CIA #596; WX7241, p.87, CIA #714]

The story is not as detailed as the 10/5/64 version. There is no mention of Deba Garro Guerrero Galvan. The story, perhaps because it is third hand, differs from the previous story in two areas: The party was at the Cuban Embassy not at Ruben Duran's; Elena talked to a Cuban Embassy official not one of her cousins about the three Americans.

Attached to the memo was a note from Flannery to the Chief of Station, Winston Scott, which read, "Do you want me to send the gist of this to Headquarters." Scott replied "yes, but we should follow up first." Flannery then wrote: "Nothing further." Scott then noted that the memo should be filed. The file indications show that the memo went into the Oswald "P" file and the Elena Garro "P" file. (ibid)

7  
NOVEMBER 24, 1964 CIA Informant Report.

On November 24, 1964 a Central Intelligence Agency informant [The House Select Committee has been unable to determine the informant's identity] reported information [Memo from Winston Scott to the files, re: June Cobb, 11/25/64, CIA Nos. 592-593; WX 7241, p. 88, Entry # 404, CIA # 715.] he had learned from "LICHANT/1. [While reviewing LICHANT I's file the Committee determined that the CIA <sup>clear claims that</sup> asserts June's name was Manuel Calvillo. The day following the assassination of John F. Kennedy, Calvillo escorted her and her daughter to the Vermont Hotel for protection; See also December 25, 1965 <sup>Thomas</sup> memo for more information on Manuel Calvillo.] The informant asserted that June Cobb was an "American Communist" who rented a room from Elena Harris. [Memo from Winston Scott to the files, re: June Cobb, 11/25/64, CIA Nos. 592-593; WX-7241, p. 88, Entry # 404, CIA No. 715.] The informant also stated that Elena tried to talk to Robert Kennedy when he was in Mexico because she had met Oswald "and two friends (Cubans)" at a party at Anacio Duran's house. (Ibid.) In addition, the informant claimed that Elena also told her story to an American official, at the Embassy, who claimed to represent the Warren Commission. (Ibid.) The Chief of Station noted <sup>that</sup> he had asked the informant to pursue the story (Ibid.), but there is ~~no~~ indication that LICHANT I ever complied with this request [HSCA Review of Classified CIA Documents]



8

NOVEMBER 24, 1964 ELENA MEETING WITH MEXICO CITY  
LEGAL ATTACHE OFFICERS

<sup>and her daughter</sup>  
Elena also told <sup>their</sup> ~~her~~ story to the Mexico City  
Legal Attache. [The legal attache in 1964 was Clark  
Anderson]. They reminded the same story previously given to  
LICOOKIE I. The date of the party was given as September  
30, October 1 or October 2, 1963. [FBI 105-825555 Report, Dec.  
11, 1964 entitled Lee Harvey Oswald, p.1] The agent who  
wrote the report [ I noted that ~~the~~ Lee Harvey  
Oswald could not have been identical with the American  
allegedly observed by Mrs. Paz at the party, if this party  
were held on the evening of October 1 or October 2, 1963. &  
[FBI 105-825555 Report, Dec. 11, 1964 entitled Lee Harvey Oswald, p.1]  
~~because~~ FBI investigation of the John F. Kennedy  
assassination had established that Lee Harvey Oswald  
had departed Mexico City by bus at 8:30 a.m. on  
October 2, 1963 when Mrs. Paz stated that she saw Lee  
Harvey Oswald walking on Insurgentes. [ibid p.3]

Elena was questioned regarding the identity of other  
persons attending the party at the Ruben Duran home who  
might have been in a position to observe the three Americans.  
Elena stated that in the course of the party her daughter  
met a young man named "Alejandro" at the party and danced  
with him. <sup>(c.b.d p.3)</sup> He was apparently quite smitten with the  
daughter and tried to call her on several occasions after  
the party. <sup>(c.b.d p.3)</sup> The daughter did not take the calls and as  
a result "Alejandro" wrote several letters to the daughter.  
Ms. Garro exhibited two of the letters, as well as a  
business card which identified the young man as Ario Alejandro  
Lavagnini Stenius. (IBID p.3)

November 24, 1964 CIA Informant Report.

On November 24, 1964 a CIA informant reported  
some information he had heard

9

The letter which Ms. Garro said was the first written by the young man to her daughter bore the date September 1, 1963 and the Mexico City Post Office postmark September 2, 1963. When Ms. Garro was told this she commented that probably the Communists have facilities for falsifying postcards. (IBID)

To further investigate Ms. Garro's story, the Federal Bureau interviewed Ario Alejandro Lavagnini Stenius on November 27, 1964. (IBID.<sup>p4</sup>) Lavagnini recalled that there were approximately thirty people at the Ruban Duran party, few of whom he knew. He recalled having met a Mexican girl who had recently returned from living in France. He was unable to fix the date of the party, but felt it was probably early in September because of a heavy rain which occurred as they were leaving the party about 2:00 a.m. (IBID. p. 4)

Lavagnini noted no Americans present at this party. He was familiar with the appearance of Lee Harvey Oswald because of publicity following the assassination of President Kennedy but otherwise had no knowledge of him and had never seen him except for news photographs following the assassination. (IBID. p. 4) [*Lavagnini was the only person interviewed by the FBI at the Duran house in the September-October time frame, that the FBI reported.*]  
There is no indication on the document that this information was given to the Central Intelligence Agency's Mexico City Station.

Charles Thomas

First Meeting with ELENA GARRO WHERE LEE HARVEY  
OSWALD IS DISCUSSED.

On 12/10/65 Charles Thomas, a political officer at the American Embassy, wrote a memorandum about a conversation with Elena Garro de Paz. (CIA #586-587, WX-7241 Entry No. 425, p. 91, CIA No. 718.) The meeting with Elena had been about other matters but she mentioned knowing Oswald. Thomas noted that she was reluctant to talk but did. (ibid)

Elena's story reported here is the same, but with more details, as that given in the LICOOKIE Memo. She said that General <sup>José Sesos (a friend of Rubén Durán's)</sup> Clark Flores, <sup>(Cuban Consul in Mexico City)</sup> Silvia Duran, <sup>(a pro-Communist writer friend of the Durans)</sup> Eusebio Azcue, Emilio Carballido, and a Latin American Negro man <sup>(unidentified)</sup> with red hair were at the party. A marginal comment by this entry in WX-7241 says, "How did Elena know about a red-haired Negro?" Elena also told Thomas that she had later learned that Silvia Duran had been "Oswald's mistress while he was there." (A note by this entry in WX-7241 says "How did Elena Garro know about Silvia being the mistress of Oswald?? This is 1965.")

*The Mexico City Station did not hear about the Oswald-Duran "affair" until July 1967 when a CIA Asset Siring/13 reported it. [after reviewing SIRING/13 file at the CIA the House Select Committee on Assassinations has been unable to determine <sup>who</sup> SIRING/13 was associated with that had knowledge about Sylvia Duran or Lee Harvey Oswald.]*

Elena told Thomas that she and her daughter had gone to the Cuban Embassy <sup>23</sup> on November 1963. ~~Once inside~~ <sup>and</sup> the gates they shouted "assasins" and other insults at the Embassy employees. <sup>[CIA # 586-587, WX7241, Entry No. 425, p. 91, CIA No. 718]</sup> ~~Shortly after this incident a~~ <sup>That same day</sup> friend, Manuel Calvillo, an official in the Gobernacion, took her and her daughter to a small hotel in the center

11

of Mexico City. <sup>(ibid)</sup> They were kept there for eight days under the pretext that they were in danger. <sup>(ibid)</sup> Elena claimed to have told Calvillo that she wanted to tell her story to the American Embassy. <sup>(ibid)</sup> Calvillo dissuaded her by telling her that the American Embassy was full of Communist spies. <sup>(ibid)</sup> Elena said that some of the other people who had been at the party were taken to Veracruz where they were "protected" by Governor Lopez Arias. <sup>(ibid)</sup> *[The House Select Committee was unable to determine the veracity of Mr. Paz' allegation]* She said that Ruben Duran, reportedly "protected" by General Clark Flores, was very prosperous and was driving a big car. *[CIA # 586-587, U2-7241, Entry No. 425, P. 91, CIA No. 718]*

Elena also claimed ~~that Ruben Duran told her months after the assassination~~ <sup>that he was not really a Communist and that the assassination</sup> ~~[The House Select Committee has not been able to determine if he had been a mistake. (ibid), The House Select Committee on Assassinations has not been able to determine if whether Ruben actually told Elena about the assassination. Ruben Duran claims he had no reason to]~~

*Charles Thomas circled a copy of the including the Charles Thomas memorandum was sent to the Central Intelligence Agency's Mexico City Station to aid them in their investigation of the John F. Kennedy assassination. [The House Select Committee has been unable to determine when the Central Intelligence Agency received the copy of the Thomas memorandum prior to December 25, 1965. See below.]*

The COS wrote a note on the memo which says: "What an imagination she has!?! Should we send to Headquarters?" The Officer replied, "Suggest sending. There have been stories around town about all this, and Thomas is not only person she has talked to...If memory serves me, didn't LICOOKIE refer to Oswald and the local leftists and Cubans in one of her squibs?" (CIA No. 588, note from SW to COS.)

12

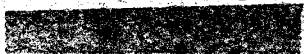
The Mexico City Station called the information in Thomas' 12/10/65 memorandum of conversation for CIA Headquarters (Cable from Mexico City to the Director, Mexi 5621, date cut off my copy; CIA Nos. 584-585) →

The cable <sup>reported</sup> said that Elena's story would be checked with LICHANT/1, against the production from the Cuban surveillance operation "and other sources." (IBID.) <sup>Winston</sup> Scott wrote, next to the routing indications on the cable, "Please ask Charles Thomas if he'll "follow-up". Get questions from Anne G. Please let's discuss. Thanks." <sup>(Anne Goodpasture)</sup>

After the December 10 memorandum <sup>of</sup> conversations, Winston Scott (Chief/Station) and Nathan Ferris (Legal Attache) called C. Thomas for a meeting. They asked him to get a more detailed replay of Ms. Garro's story. At this meeting Winston Scott made it clear that the FBI had full responsibility for any further investigation in the Oswald case. (State Dept: letter from Charles Thomas to William P. Rogers, July 25, 1969, JFK Doc. # )

13

Charles Thomas Meeting with ELENA GARRO  
ON DECEMBER 25, 1965



Thomas met with Elena again on December 25, 1965.

The same date he wrote a memorandum of conversation which provided a much more detailed ~~and complete~~ restatement of Ms. Garro's alleged encounter with Lee Harvey Oswald and subsequent developments. (CIA Nos. 580-583; WX-7241, Entry #427, p. 92, CIA #719)

Elena admitted that she had spoken to two men at the Embassy "(presumably from the Legal Attache's Office)." (ibid: ~~Nov 2~~  
The meeting occurred on Nov. 24, 1964)

Elena She said that she did not tell them the <sup>complete</sup> whole story

because "the Embassy officers did not give much credence to anything she and Elena said." (CIA Nos. 580-583; WX-7241, Entry #427, p. 92, CIA #719)

She stated that the party had been at Ruben Duran's home. (ibid) She was unclear about the date of the party. (ibid) It was a few days before the Soviet Astronaut, Gagarin, visited Mexico; she thought that this would put the party around September 2 or 3, 1963. (ibid) She believed that the party was on a Monday or Tuesday because it was an odd night for a party. (ibid) ~~The memo noted that September 1 and 2 were indeed a Monday and Tuesday.~~ Elena could not check her calender to refresh her memory at the time of the interview because the calender was in a desk that had been stored away. (ibid)



14



During the conversation Elena described Oswald and his companions. <sup>(ibid)</sup> The man who she thought was Oswald wore a black sweater. <sup>(ibid)</sup> She said he was quiet "and stared a lot at the floor." <sup>(ibid)</sup> One of his companions "was very tall and slender and had long blond hair which hung across his forehead." <sup>(ibid)</sup> He had a gaunt face and a rather long protruding chin." <sup>ibid</sup> The other companion was also tall, with short, light brown hair and no ~~really~~ distinguishing characteristics. <sup>(ibid)</sup> The three Americans did not dance or mix with the other guests. <sup>(ibid)</sup> Elena saw the same three men on the street the next day. (IBID.)

Elena was certain that Eusebio Azcue, Horacio Duran, Silvia Duran, Lydia Duran, Deba Guerrero, General Clark Flores and his mistress, a doctor from Dalinde Hospital,





