

JFK Assassination System
Identification Form

Date: 2/16/201

Agency Information

AGENCY : HSCA
RECORD NUMBER : 180-10142-10133
RECORD SERIES : CIA SEGREGATED COLLECTION
AGENCY FILE NUMBER : 23-15-09

Released under the John
F. Kennedy
Assassination Records
Collection Act of 1992
(44 USC 2107 Note).
Case#:NW 53080 Date:
06-01-2017

Document Information

ORIGINATOR : HSCA
FROM : CIA
TO :

TITLE : SYLVIA DURAN'S PREVIOUS STATEMENTS RE LHO'S VISIT TO THE CUBAN CONSUL.

DATE : 00/00/0000
PAGES : 34

SUBJECTS :

CUBAN EMBASSY IN MEXICO CITY
SOVIET EMBASSY IN MEXICO CITY
OSWALD, LEE, POST-RUSSIAN PERIOD, TRAVEL TRIP TO
MEXICO
DURAN SYLVIA

DOCUMENT TYPE : REPORT
CLASSIFICATION : Unclassified
RESTRICTIONS : 1A; 1B
CURRENT STATUS : Redact
DATE OF LAST REVIEW : 01/01/2003

OPENING CRITERIA :

COMMENTS : Box 12

SYLVIA DURAN'S PREVIOUS STATEMENTS RE LEE HARVEY OSWALD'S
VISIT TO THE CUBAN CONSULATE IN MEXICO CITY

IV. C. Silvia Duran

On November 23, 1963, one day after the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, the Central Intelligence Agency's Mexico City Station suggested to Mexican officials that they arrest Sylvia Tirado de Duran. (Mexi 7029 to the Director, Nov. 23, 1963; Note to Luis Echevarria, November 23, 1963) The Mexico City Station asked that Sylvia Tirado de Duran be held incommunicado until she told the Mexican officials everything she knew about Lee Harvey Oswald. The Mexican government arrested Sylvia Tirado de Duran the same day. Captain Fernando Gutierrez Barrios, Assistant Director of the Federal Security Police, interrogated her at 6:00 p.m. that evening. (CE 2121, p. 35)

1 Version of Interrogation Given to the Warren Commission
By The Mexican Government

Ms. Duran stated that she became secretary to the Consul, Eusebio Azcue, three months prior to the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, due to the death of Maricarmen Olivari. (Ibid. p. 37) She stated that in late September or early October of 1963 a North American by the name of Lee Harvey Oswald appeared at the Cuban Consulate and applied for an intransit visa to Russia by way of Cuba. (Ibid. p. 39) Duran stated that Oswald presented

presented evidence that he had been in Russia for three years, that he was married to a Russian woman and also that he was the leader of an organization in New Orleans called "Fair Play for Cuba." Sylvia Duran stated that Oswald stressed that his visa application should be accepted as he was a friend of the Cuban Revolution. (Ibid. p. 39) Sylvia Duran stated that there, in compliance with her duties, she had Oswald fill out the appropriate application (Ibid. p. 39). Oswald then left and returned in the afternoon with the necessary photographs. (Ibid. p. 39) Ms. Duran stated that at that time, exceeding her duties, she telephoned the Russian Consulate because of her interest in facilitating the handling of the Russian visa for Lee Harvey Oswald. (Ibid. p. 39) The Russian Embassy told Duran that there would be a delay of approximately four months in processing the case, which annoyed Lee Harvey Oswald since, according to his statements, he was in a great hurry to obtain a visa to travel to Russia. He insisted on his right to obtain a visa in view of his background and activities on behalf of the Cuban movement. (Ibid. p. 39) When Oswald understood that it was not possible to give him a Cuban visa without previously obtaining a Russian visa, he became extremely angry. (Ibid. p. 39)

At this point Ms. Duran stated she called Consul Azcue, who, at that time was in his private office accompanied by his upcoming replacement Alfredo Mirabal. (Ibid. p. 40) Mr. Azcue came out of his office and argued with Oswald in English. (Ibid. p. 40) Ms. Duran stated that Mr. Azcue told Oswald that a person like him instead of aiding the Cuban Revolution, did it harm. (Ibid., p. 40) Oswald at that point stated that he had two reasons for requesting his visa with such urgency: one, that his Mexican permit expired soon; and two, that he needed to reach Russian soon. (Ibid., p. 40) Sylvia Duran stated that in spite of the argument she gave Oswald a piece of paper with her name and Consulate business phone number (11-28-47) (Ibid., p. 40) Ms. Duran stated that she also initiated the handling of his visa application by sending it to the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Relations, from which a reply was received in the normal manner some fifteen to thirty days later approving the issuance of an intransit visa on the condition that he previously obtain a Russian visa. (Ibid. p. 40) Mrs. Duran stated that she does not recall whether Oswald subsequently called her on the Consulate phone number which she had given him. (Ibid. p. 40) Sylvia Duran stated that all the conversations that Eusebio Azcue and she had with Oswald were in the English language since

Oswald did not speak any Spanish. (Ibid. p. 40) Finally, she stated that upon seeing Lee Harvey Oswald's photograph in the newspapers, she immediately recognized and identified it as being the same person that she remember as Lee Harvey Oswald. (Ibid. p. 40)

At the time of Sylvia Duran's detainment her pertinent statements about Lee Harvey Oswald were written by the Mexican government and given to Mrs. Duran to read and sign.

SECTION
SUBMITTAL
1. E. 1. what happened to it where did it go, how + when

to Havana. (Cable from Mexico City Station to Headquarters, November 27, 1963, Mexi 7104, CIA #482; Cable from Mexico City Station to Headquarters, November 27, 1963, Mexi 7101, CIA #493). The Mexican officials told Sylvia Duran that they were detaining her to protect her. (HSCA Staff Interview of Sylvia Duran, 6/6/78 p. JFK Document No.)

Subsequently about her second detainment, Duran stated, "They were very rough this time...they repeated the same questions but they were more, how do you say, evil. And they...wanted to know exactly what I have done in Cuba, the people that I met there, everything. They were asking me questions about all the people that were working the Embassy and this time I wanted to go to the bathroom and they wouldn't let me and it was longer, because it was from 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. (HSCA Staff Interview of Sylvia Duran, 6/6/78 p. JFK Document No.)

According to the Mexican officials that detained Duran a second time she remembered Oswald perfectly and denied he wore glasses. Otherwise there was no addition to her story. (Cable from Mexico City Station to Director, December 12, 1963, Mexi 7364, CIA No. 557-558).

what happened to this one

VI *A* House Select Committee on Assassinations Interview of

1 Sylvia Duran 6/6/78

2 CIA INFO Sylvia Tirado Bazan told the House Select Committee

ON S.D on Assassinations staffers the following:.

2 AVAILABLE to W.C.

I.E. LIRING / Phillips / Hidalgo etc

~~woman visit their offices to get a visa and then get into
an argument with staff personnel.~~

HSCA INVESTIGATION OF SYLVIA DURAN'S ACCOUNT OF LEE HARVEY
OSWALD'S VISIT TO THE CUBAN CONSULATE IN MEXICO CITY

VI. B
To investigate Sylvia Duran's account of Lee Harvey Oswald's visits to the Cuban Consulate the Committee sought the cooperation of the Cuban Government. The Committee traveled to Cuba twice interviewing most of the Cuban employees at the Cuban Consulate and Embassy in Mexico City in September 1963. (See Procedural Writeups Cuba Trips 1 and 2) Only two individuals remembered Oswald, Eusebio Azcue Lopez and Alfredo Mirabal Diaz. Only Eusebio Azcue personally dealt with Lee Harvey Oswald. Alfredo Mirabal could only state that he never doubted that the Lee Harvey Oswald who visited the Consulate was the same Lee Harvey Oswald shot by Jack Ruby in the basement of the Dallas Police Department that he caught only glimpses of him. (HSCA Interview of Alfredo Mirabal Diaz, p. ; also

Expand
For this reason, only Eusebio Azcue Lopez and Sylvia Tirado Bazan's accounts will be dealt with in detail.

RECONSTRUCT After interviewing Sylvia Duran and Eusebio Azcue the Committee has found conflicting stories. Ms. Duran told the Committee that Lee Harvey Oswald visited the Cuban Consulate on three occasions, all on September 27, 1963. (HSCA Interview of Sylvia Duran, 6/6/78, JFK Document No. , p. 523) This contradicts her statement to the Mexican officials that Oswald had visited the Consulate on two occasions, both on September 27, 1963. (See section entitled Version of Interrogative Given to the Warren Commission by Mexican Government. (Also, see section entitled Original Signed Statement of Sylvia Duran Interrogation by the Mexican Government.) Though neither report quotes Tirado as stating that Oswald's visits were on September 27, 1963, she states that they occurred on the same day in late September or early October. (Ibid.) When the House Select Committee on Assassinations checked Oswald's visa application, the date September 27, 1963 was clearly marked on it. (See Oswald Visa application.)

Mr. Azcue remembered three visits to the Cuban Consulate occurring on different dates. Mr. Azcue stated that Oswald's first visit would have been "one or two days prior to the date on the visa application at around 1:00 p.m." (HSCA Interview of Eusebio Azcue, , JFK

Document No. , p. 3) Mr. Azcue stated that Oswald probably returned to the Consulate the following day "at approximately the same time that he came on his first visit" (Ibid., p. 4) with his photographs--"probably that same day listed on the (visa) application, the 27th of September." (Ibid., p. 3) Azcue stated that Oswald left to get a Soviet visa and probably returned to the Cuban Consulate one day after he had filled out the visa. (Ibid., p. 6(Tape 2)) Mr. Azcue stated that it was then that he had the argument with Oswald. (Ibid., p. 6 Tape 2)

Ms. Tirado stated that Oswald first visited the Cuban Consulate at approximately 11:00 a.m. requesting an intransit visa to Cuba with Russia as the final destination. Oswald showed her some documents and then left to obtain photographs needed for his application. (House Select Committee on Assassinations Interview of Sylvia Duran, 6/6/78, JFK Document No. , p. 20-23)

Consul Eusebio Azcue stated that Oswald's first visit to the Cuban Consulate was "one or two days prior to the date on the visa application at around 1:00 p.m. (HSCA Interview of Eusebio Azcue, , JFK Document No. , p. 3)

Ms. Tirado stated that Oswald returned at approxi-

mately 1:00 p.m. with four photographs. (House Select Committee on Assassinations Interview of Sylvia Duran, 6/6/78, JFK Document No. , p. 23) Azcue stated that Lee Harvey Oswald returned to the Cuban Consulate about 1:00 p.m. with the photographs "probably that same day listed on the visa application, the 27th of September." (HSCA Interview with Eusebio Azcue, JFK Document No. , p.3) This is the Oswald visit Ms. Tirado had never mentioned before or had mentioned but had never been reported before. (See above.) Ms. Tirado stated that she typed Oswald's visa application in duplicate, stapled a picture on top of each and had Oswald sign each in her presence. (House Select Committee on Assassinations Interview of Sylvia Duran, 6/6/78, JFK Document No. , p. 24, 25) As proof Oswald showed her special documents he had brought with him: his Russian labor card, marriage certificate with name of Russian wife, his American Communist Party membership card and his "Fair Play for Cuba" membership card. (HSCA, Ibid., p. 28); See also, C.E. p. 39; See also, Original Signed Statement of Sylvia Duran Interrogation by the Mexican Government, Blind Memo re Lee Harvey Oswald and Sylvia Duran, November 26, 1963, CIA #473).

Ms. Tirado stated that she found Lee Harvey Oswald's behavior suspicious because normally a Communist travelled only with his passport because belonging to the Communist

Party was illegal in Mexico in 1963. (House Select Committee on Assassinations Interview of Sylvia Duran, 6/6/78, JFK Document No. , p. 30) Consul Eusibio Azcue also stated that he found LHO's behavior suspicious. (HSCA Interview of Azcue, Ms. Tirado stated that there was a procedure whereby the , JFK Document # American Communist Party would arrange visa matters for p. 5) their members with the Cuban Communist Party. (Ibid., p. 29, 30) The American would then come to Mexico, visit the Cuban Consulate and receive his visa immediately. (Ibid, p. 30) When Duran asked Oswald why he did not have the American Communist Party arrange his trip to Cuba he stated that he did not have time. (Ibid., p. 29) Ms. Tirado told the House Select Committee staffers that she had stated this to the Mexican officials. They had a stenographer present during the entire interrogation. (Ibid., p. 93) The Mexican officials never passed the information to the American authorities.

Ms. Tirado stated that she explained to Oswald that he had to acquire a Russian visa before he could receive a Cuban visa. (HSCA Interview of Sylvia Duran, 6/6/78, JFK Document No. , p. ; Warren Commission Exhibit 2121, p. 39; Blind Memo re Lee Harvey Oswald and Sylvia Duran, November 26, 1963, CIA #473) Duran jotted her name and business phone number on a piece of paper, gave it to Lee Harvey Oswald. (HSCA Interview of Sylvia Duran, 6/6/78, JFK Document No. # , p. 46; Warren Commission

Exhibit 2121, p. 39; Blind Memo re Lee Harvey Oswald and Sylvia Duran, November 26, 1963, CIA #473) who then left to get his Russian visa. (HSCA Interview of Sylvia Duran, 6/6/78, JFK Document No. # , p. 31; HSCA Interview of Eusebio Azcue, , JFK Document No. , Tape 2 p. 6)

Ms. Tirado stated that Lee Harvey Oswald returned to the Cuban Consulate late in the afternoon after working hours which were between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. (House Select Committee on Assassinations Interview of Sylvia Duran, 6/6/78, JFK Document No. , p. 37) The Committee has conflicting testimony concerning Lee Harvey Oswald's third visit. Consul Eusebio Azcue stated that the third Oswald visit probably occurred one or two days after he had filled out the visa application. (House Select Committee on Assassinations Interview of Eusebio Azcue, , JFK Document No. , Tape 2 p. 6)

Ms. Tirado stated that the guard routinely called her saying that someone who did not speak Spanish was at the gate inquiring about a visa. (House Select Committee on Assassinations Interview of Sylvia Duran, 6/6/78, JFK Document No. pp. 37-38) Per routine procedure she asked the guard to escort the individual to her office. (Ibid., p. 38) Oswald told her that he had acquired a Russian

visa. (Ibid., p. 38) Since he did not produce it when asked she called the Russian Consulate. (Ibid., p. 39)

The Mexican government's official report to the Warren Commission stated that when Oswald came back with the photographs, Ms. Duran exceeding her duties telephoned the Russian Consulate because of her interest in facilitating the handling of the Russian visa for Lee Harvey Oswald. (Warren Commission Exhibit 2121, p. 39) The report given by the Mexican officials to the Central Intelligence Agency after their initial interrogation stated that the only ^{Sylvia} aid/Duran could give Oswald was advising that he see the Soviet Consul and calling the person in charge ~~of~~ ~~of~~ that office. (Blind Memo re Lee Harvey Oswald and Sylvia Duran, November 26, 1963, CIA #473)

Ms. Duran stated that she had been irked when the Mexican government reported to the Warren Commission that by calling the Russian Consulate she had exceeded her duties. (Ibid., p. 91) Consul Eusibio Azcue stated that if Ms. Tirado wanted to phone the Russian Consulate she was authorized to do it. (House Select Committee on Assassinations Interview of Eusebio Azcue, , JFK Document No. , Tape 2, p. 4) Ms. Tirado stated that the Russian Consul told her that Oswald had been to the Consulate requesting a visa and had been told that the reply would take approximately four months. (House Select

Committee on Assassinations Interview of Sylvia Duran, 6/6/78, JFK Document No. , p. 39; Warren Commission Exhibit 2121, p. 39; Blind Memo re Lee Harvey Oswald and Sylvia Duran, November 26, 1963, CIA #473) Ms. Tirado stated that when she relayed the message to Lee Harvey Oswald he got very excited, insisting that as a person who had been in jail because of the Cuban Revolution he should receive a Cuban visa. (House Select Committee on Assassinations Interview of Sylvia Duran, 6/6/78, JFK Document No. , p. 40); Warren Commission Exhibit 2121, p. 39) Ms. Tirado stated that Oswald said that he could not wait a long period of time because his Mexican visa expired in three days. (House Select Committee on Assassinations Interview of Sylvia Duran, 6/6/78, JFK Document No. , p. 40; Warren Commission Exhibit 2121, p. 39) Ms. Tirado stated that at this point she called Consul Eusebio Azcue, who was in his office accompanied by his upcoming replacement Alfredo Mirabal. (Ibid., p. 39) Consul Eusebio Azcue does not recall that the sequence of events occurred in this manner. (See above.) Ms. Tirado stated that Consul Eusebio Azcue politely explained the requisites for an intrasit visa to Oswald. (House Select Committee on Assassinations Interview of Sylvia Duran, 4/6/67, JFK Document No. , p. 39, 47)

When Azcue noticed that Oswald was a stubborn man he told Oswald that obviously he was not a friend of the Cuban Revolution, because if he was a friend he would understand that Cuba had to be extremely careful with the people it allowed in Cuba. (Ibid., p. 47) Ms. Tirado stated that Azcue and Oswald yelled at each other. (Ibid. 44) Azcue then went to the door, opened it and asked Oswald to leave. (Ibid. 47)

Ms. Tirado stated that Oswald did not revisit or telephone the Consulate because if he had she would have remembered it. She stated that the Consulate did not have many American visitors who had been to Russia and had married a Russian woman attempt to get a Cuban visa and then get into an argument with staff personnel. (Ibid. p 51)

Lee Harvey Oswald's number of visits to the Cuban Consulate on September 27, 1963 are not of major substantive importance. The importance lies in Lee Harvey Oswald's visit to the Cuban Consulate after visiting hours. (10-2) Ms. Duran told House Select Committee on Assassinations staffers that Lee Harvey Oswald made his third visit to the Consulate late afternoon around 5:00 p.m. (HSCA Interview of Sylvia Duran, 6/6/78, JFK Document No. p. 543) In 1963, Central Intelligence Agency's Mexico City Station

surveilled both the Cuban and Soviet Diplomatic compounds electronically. From the electric surveillance of the Soviet Embassy the Central Intelligence Agency learned of the following two conversations:

At approximately 4:05 p.m. ^(what date?) Sylvia Duran called the Soviet Embassy. She told the person at the Embassy that an American citizen seeking a visa was at the Cuban Consulate. Sylvia explained that the American citizen wanted to know the name of the official he had dealt with at the Soviet Embassy. Sylvia had sent the American to the Soviet Embassy stating that his acquiring a Cuban visa was contingent on his previously acquiring a Soviet visa. Sylvia explained to the Soviet official that the American had stated that he was assured that there would be no problem. At that point, the Soviet official put another official on the phone, causing Sylvia to repeat the story. The official then asked Sylvia to leave her name and number to call her later. This conversation was also in Spanish. (Classified Staff Summary of Review of CIA Documents, 3/9/78, pp. 6-7; Cable from Mexico to the Director, 11/23/63, MEXI 7025; CIA Transcript from Russian Embassy, 9/27/63.)

At 4:26 p.m. an unidentified Soviet official called Sylvia Duran inquiring whether the American citizen had been to the Cuban consulate office. Sylvia responded

affirmatively, stating that the American was at the office at that time. The Soviet official told Sylvia that when the American visited the Soviet Consulate office he had displayed papers from the Soviet Consulate in Washington. He also had a letter stating that he was a member of an organization that favored Cuba. The American wanted to go to the U.S.S.R. with his Russian wife and remain there a long time. The Soviet official had not received an answer from Washington to the American's problem. The problem traditionally took four to five months to resolve because Washington had to secure authorization from the U.S.S.R. The Soviet official added that the American's wife could get a visa in Washington very quickly and she could have it sent anywhere but that he felt that the American would not get a visa soon. Sylvia said that the Cuban government could not give the American a visa because he had neither friends in Cuba nor authorization (?) for a visa from the U.S.S.R. The Soviet official added that the Soviets could not give the American a letter of recommendation because they did not know him. This conversation was also in the Spanish transcripts. (Classified Staff Summary of Review of CIA Documents, 3/9/78, pp. 7-10; Cable from Mexico City to the Director, 11/23/63, MEXI 7025; CIA Transcript from Russian Embassy, 9/27/78.)

These two phone calls were summarized by Sylvia Duran when she stated that she called the Russian Consulate who said that Oswald had been told that the reply from the Soviet Union would take approximately four months. (See Version of interrogation given to the Warren Commission by Mexican Government; Original signed statement of Sylvia Duran Interrogation by the Mexican government; and HSCA interview of Sylvia Duran, 6/6/78, JFK Document No.) Ms. Duran failed to mention that the Soviet official took her number and called her back. The Committee attributes Ms. Duran's neglect to mention the call from the unidentified Soviet--probably the Soviet Consul--to forgetfulness, since she has consistently stated the substance of the conversation. (Ibid.)

Mr. Azcue stated that he understood that the Soviet Consul called him but "maybe a secretary called the Soviet Consul and then the Soviet Consul called me, that's possible. (HSCA interview of Eusebio Azcue, JFK Document No. , Tape 2, p. 11) Mr. Azcue's statement does not explain the Friday, September 27, 1963, 4:26 p.m. call because it was Sylvia who spoke to the Soviet Consul. (See September 27, 1963, 4:26 p.m. call.) Azcue states that he spoke to the Soviet Consul. The Committee has never seen a transcript of this phone call. One of four explanations is possible: 1) The Soviet Consul called Azcue

from a telephone at the Soviet Embassy that was not tapped; 2) the Soviet Consul called Azcue from outside the Soviet compounds; and 3) Mr. Azcue never spoke to the Soviet Consul--Sylvia Duran did--and recalls discussing the call with her, making him believe that it was he who spoke to the Soviet Consul; or 4) the Soviet Consul did call Azcue on one of the tapped phones and the C.I.A. never forwarded the transcript to the House Select Committee on Assassinations staffers to review.

Ms. Duran stated that the guard routinely called her when an individual who did not speak Spanish came to the gate inquiring about a visa after work hours. (HSCA Interview of Sylvia Duran, 6/6/78, JFK Document No. , p. 544) Sylvia Duran stated that she would normally ask the guard to escort the individual to her office. (Ibid. p. 544) At this point Committee staffers asked her if it was possible that in addition to his visits on Friday, September 27, he also visited the Consulate on Saturday, September 28, though the office was again not open to the public. (Ibid. p. 547) Ms. Duran stated that it was not possible because she remembered the fight and would have remembered if he came back. (Ibid. p. 547) When asked if there was a guard at the gate on Saturdays, Sylvia Duran answered yes, but that he never let people in Saturdays because he could reach her on the intercommunications

telephone. (Ibid. p. 549) When the Committee staffers explained to Ms. Duran that the guard could also do that on Fridays, Ms. Duran stated that he remembered having given Lee Harvey Oswald her name and business telephone number on his second visit. (Ibid. p. 549) The Committee does not consider Ms. Duran's answer responsive because Lee Harvey Oswald probably had her name and business telephone number on Saturday also. When the Committee staffers pressed Ms. Duran on her answer she stated that the guard was allowed to bring individuals to her office during the five to eight non-public work weekdays but not on weekends. (Ibid. p. 549)

The Committee does not consider her explanation credible. Eusebio Azcue stated that visiting hours at the Cuban Consulate were 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday. (HSCA Interview of Eusibio Azcue, 4/3/78, JFK Document No. , p. 6)

Also, from the electronic surveillance of the Soviet Embassy by the Central Intelligence Agency Mexico City Station the Committee learned that on Saturday, September 28, 1963, Sylvia Duran called the Soviet Consulate at 11:51 a.m. stating that there was an American citizen at the Cuban Consulate who had previously visited the Soviet Consulate. The Soviet asked Sylvia to wait a minute. Upon his return to the telephone, Sylvia put the American

on the line. At first, the American spoke in Russian and the Soviet spoke English. The conversation then proceeded in English until the Russian discontinued it, and put another Soviet on the line. The Soviet spoke in English but the American, in broken Russian, asked him to speak Russian. The conversation resumed in Russian at that point. It also became incoherent and is thus quoted in its entirety:

Russian: What else do you want?

American: I was just now at your Embassy and they took my address.

Russian: I know that.

American:--speaks terrible, hardly recognizable Russian. I did not know it then. I went to the Cuban Embassy to ask them for my address, because they have it.

Russian: Why don't you come again and leave your address with us? it is not far from the Cuban Embassy.

American: Well, I'll be there right away.

(Classified Staff Summary of Review of CIA Documents, 3/9/78, pp. 10-12; CIA Transcript from Russian Embassy, 9/28/63)

The Committee feels that there is a possibility that the American Sylvia Duran put in contact with a Soviet official on Saturday, September 28, 1963, was Lee Harvey Oswald. The American citizen had previously visited the Soviet Consulate and called from Sylvia Duran's office on a Saturday when the guard never allowed visitors into the Cuban compound. (Ibid. p. 549)

The Committee feels that Sylvia may have lied about an Oswald visit to the Cuban Consulate on Saturday, September 28, 1963, for either of two reasons: 1) Ms. Duran did not wish to disclose that Oswald had visited the Cuban Consulate again after his argument with Consul Eusebio Azcue and that she had decided to aid him; 2) Ms. Duran may have had personal reasons. Elena Garro de Paz reported that she attended a "twist party at Ruben Duran's house which Oswald, accompanied by two other American young men, also attended." (See write-up.) Elena also reported that Duran had an affair with Lee Harvey Oswald. (Ibid.) The Committee attempted to locate Elena Garro de Paz who might have shed some light into this area. (See Elena write-up.) If Sylvia Duran did in fact have an affair with Lee Harvey Oswald, he might have visited the Consulate on Saturday and Sylvia would have denied it.

The Committee also feels that there is a possibility that the man Sylvia put on the phone with the Soviet official on September 28, 1963 was not Oswald. The man Duran

put on the line spoke broken Russian. George De Mohrenschildt, Marina Oswald and George Bouke all stated that Oswald spoke a very refined Russian and that he preferred speaking Russian to English. (Note: String Cites:

Nonetheless, Ms. Duran lied to the Committee about the guard not allowing visitors into the Cuban compound on Saturdays as the electronic surveillance files for September 28, 1963 illustrate.

When Eusebio Azcue and Sylvia Tirado were asked to describe Lee Harvey Oswald, both gave similar descriptions of him that are not even remotely close to Oswald's physical appearance. Consul Azcue stated that the man who visited the Consulate looking for a visa differed from HSCA JFK Exhibit No. as follows: his nose was more aquiline; his eyelashes were straighter; his hair was blonde; his height was between five feet six and five feet seven; he was between 35 and 37 years of age; his cheeks were sunken; and, he had a cold look in his eyes.

(House Select Committee on Assassinations Interview of Eusebio Azcue, , JFK Document No. , pp. 19-21)
Consul Eusebio Azcue further stated that the man who came to the Cuban Consulate requesting an intransit visa and the person that Jack Ruby assassinated at the Dallas

police station--which he saw on television--were different persons. (Ibid. p. 18)

Ms. Tirado stated that the person that visited the Cuban Consulate and the person she saw Jack Ruby assassinate at the Dallas police station were the same person. (HSCA Interview of Sylvia Duran, 6/6/78, JFK Document No. , p.) Yet, when Ms. Tirado describes the (alleged) Lee Harvey Oswald that visited the Cuban Consulate, the man does not really bear any resemblance to Lee Harvey Oswald. Ms. Tirado stated that Lee Harvey Oswald was approximately five feet six, had blonde hair, weighed about 125 pounds, had small eyes, smaller fingers than Ed Lopez (HSCA staffer) and did not have very much hair. (Ibid. p. 96)

Since neither description resembles Oswald the Committee has determined that there is a possibility that the man who visited the Cuban Consulate was not Lee Harvey Oswald. It is difficult to justify the above since the House Select Committee Handwriting Panel has determined that the signature on the visa application matches other samples of Lee Harvey Oswald's signature. There is a possibility that a man who claimed that he was Lee Harvey Oswald picked up an application, took it to Lee Harvey Oswald who filled it, attached pictures, signed it and then returned to the Cuban Consulate once again impersonating him. The

Committee considers this a possibility because when the Committee staffers asked Duran if she would ever have allowed a person to take the application out of the Consulate, fill it out, attach a photo, sign them and then return them to the Embassy she answered affirmatively. (Ibid. p. 31) (Also no photos materialized.) The one problem with this possibility is that Ms. Tirado stated that she thinks Lee Harvey Oswald signed the visa application in her presence. (Ibid. p. 33)

IV. C
3
CIA Handling of Sylvia Duran Matter
President

When/John F. Kennedy was assassinated on November 22, 1963, the United States investigative agencies -- FBI, CIA, Secret Service, etc.--were asked to investigate the assassination. When the Central Intelligence Agency learned that Lee Harvey Oswald had visited Mexico City between late September and early October they reviewed their files and found in the electronic surveillance files phone calls to the Soviet Embassy made September 27th, September 28th, and October 1st. that could have been made by Oswald. (See Electronic Surveillance Section.) They also found phone calls between the Russian Consul and Sylvia Duran where Oswald appeared to be discussed. (See Soviet Electronic Surveillance Section.) In addition they found a phone call made by Sylvia Duran to the Soviet Consulate on September 28, 1978, where Sylvia Duran stated that there was an American citizen at the Cuban Consulate who had previously visited the Soviet Consulate, and put a man on the line. (See Soviet Electronic Surveillance Section.) A final phone call where Oswald identified himself was also found. (See Soviet Electronic Surveillance Section.)

At this point the Central Intelligence Agency determined that it would ask the Mexican Government--whom it had a good relationship with--to arrest Sylvia Duran because she might shed some light on the circumstances surrounding the assassination. Sylvia Duran was also a Mexican citizen and did not have diplomatic immunity. The Central Intelligence Agency's Mexico City Station sent a note to Luis Echevarria requesting that he arrest Sylvia Sylvia Tirado de Duran immediately. The agency stated that she was a Mexican citizen who had put Oswald in touch with the Soviet Embassy. The agency gave Echevarria a note with Duran's address, her mother's address, her brother's address, her license plate number, her home phone number and her place of work. The Mexico City Station also suggested that Duran be held incommunicado until she could be questioned on the matter. (Note to Luis Echevarria to arrest Sylvia Duran, November 23, 1963, CIA No. 444; Cable re oswald-Duran, Mexi 7029, November 23, 1963, CIA No. 441; Anne Goodpasture Chronology, Wx 7241, entry 36, November 23, 1963, CIA No. 635)

The request to Luis Echevarria was not authorized by the Central Intelligence Agency's Headquarters. When they received the cable on November 23, 1963, Headquarters

Sylvia Duran Statements
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by what? identify position.
feared that the covert surveillance operations might be endangered. *if it was desired (Chy/W&S)* Jack Whitten, stationed at Langley Headquarters, telephoned Winston Scott, the Mexico Chief of Station, asking that Sylvia Duran not be arrested. Scott told Whitten that it was too late, that he could not recall the request and that Headquarters should already have received *received* a cable which stated that Luis Echevarria had already been ~~told~~ *to* arrest Sylvia Duran, as a Mexican initiative.

Was Echevarria's told or requested And if the arrest had not yet taken place, why would request not be rescinded
(Note written by Chief of Station re phone call with Jack Whitten, November 23, 1963; Chronology prepared by Anne Goodpasture, WX 7241, entry 37. November 23, 1963, CIA No. 635) Winston Scott then telephoned Luis Echevarria and stated that the agency hoped that Sylvia Duran's arrest would be kept absolutely secret, that all information received from Duran ~~be~~ *be given forwarded* cabled to Washington immediately *to the* through the Mexico City Station, and that her arrest and statements not ~~spread~~ *be communicated* to any leftist groups. (Chief of Station phone call to Luis Echevarria, November 23, 1963, CIA No. 440; Flash Cable from Karamersinis *to* Mexico City Station, November 23, 1963, DIR 84916, CIA No. 403; Chronology of Anne Goodpasture, entry 46, November 23, 1963, CIA No. 636).

discovery
The Central Intelligence Agency feared/that Americans were behind the arrest of Sylvia Duran. It would endanger their continuing covert surveillance operations. For this reason the Mexico City Station requested the Mexicans to arrest Sylvia Duran on their initiative. Similar logic dictated when Headquarters asked the Mexico City Station to request the Mexican authorities to interrogate Sylvia Duran to the extent necessary to clarify the outstanding points raised in their cables the previous forty-eight hours. Headquarters stated that the Mexico City Station could provide questions to the Mexican interrogators but that they wished no Americans to come in contact with Duran. (Cable CIA Headquarters to Mexico City Station, November 27, 1963, DIR 85318, CIA No. 497; chronology of Anne Goodpasture, November 27, 1963, entry no. 121, CIA No. 653) When on November 27, 1963, the Mexico City Station sent a photostatic copy of Sylvia Duran's ten page signed statement to Headquarters (Cable Mexico City Station to Headquarters, November 27, 1963, Mexi 7105, CIA No. 479; Chronology of Anne Goodpasture, November 27, 1963, entry no. 127, CIA No. 656) the following day Headquarters sent a clarification cable to the Mexico City Station. Headquarters wanted to insure that neither Sylvia Duran nor the Cubans got the impression

that the Americans were behind her rearrest. The cable stated "We want the Mexican authorities to take the responsibility for the whole affair." (Cable from Headquarters to the Mexico City Station, November 28, 1963, DIR 85371, CIA No. 464; Chronology of Anne Goodpasture, November 28, 1963, WX7241, entry no. 141, CIA No. 658)

When the Central Intelligence began to deal with the Warren Commission, Headquarters cabled the Mexico City Station that their present plan in passing information to the Warren Commission was to eliminate mention of telephone taps in order to protect their continuing operations. Headquarters stated that they would rely on Sylvia Duran's statements and on the Consular files which the Soviets gave the State Department. Headquarters stressed that exact, detailed information from ~~DETAIL~~DETAIL-7 and ~~DETAIL~~DETAIL-9 (Penetration agents in the Cuban Embassy) on just what Sylvia Duran and other officials said about Oswald's visits and his dealings would be valuable and usable corroborative evidence. (CIA cable from Headquarters to Mexico City Station, December 21, 1963, DIR 90466, CIA No. 549; Chronology of Anne Goodpasture, December 21, 1963, Entry No. 268, CIA No. 682)

Prior to three Warren Commission staffers (Messers. Willins, Slawson and Coleman) visit to Mexico City in

April 1964 the Agency still felt that if an American contacted Sylvia Duran their covert continuing operations might be endangered. Headquarters cabled the Mexico City Station that one of the touchy subjects that the staffers would discuss was whether they should talk to Sylvia Duran in Mexico at the Consulate. (Cable Headquarters to Mexico City Station, April 8, 1964, DIR 13026, CIA No. 698) Headquarters further cabled that the Warren Commission staffers knew that the Central Intelligence Agency had tap assets and that they might have guessed from the coverage that they had photo points and a source in the Cuban Embassy but that they did not know the details on the Agency's arrangements with the Mexicans. Headquarters stressed that the Chief of Station should lend them all the needed assistance with the minimum possible disclosure of assets and techniques. (Ibid.)

At this point the House Select Committee on Assassinations has determined that the Central Intelligence Agency thought their continuing electronic surveillance operation extremely sensitive and important. The Warren Commission would have needed to disclose sensitive information to contradict Sylvia Duran's story. The Central Intelligence Agency had input into what could go in the Warren Report. (See Chuck Berk Write-up.)