

July 15, 1998

Prof. Peter Dale Scott
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Dear Professor Scott:

Your letters requesting that the Review Board try to locate additional records regarding the Mexican DFS interrogations of Silvia Tirado de Duran, and your work on this subject presented in *Deep Politics II*, have been very helpful in our review of and search for assassination records. As you may already be aware, some of the earlier postponements which you cited in *Deep Politics II* have since been released by the Board. We suggest that you now refer to the most recently declassified copies of *The Lopez Report* (HSCA doc. 180-10110-10484) and *The Mexico City Chronology* (CIA doc. 104-10086-10001). In addition, the Board recently reviewed a CIA document which is a comprehensive summary of records pertaining to the investigation of Silvia Duran (CIA doc. 104-10102-10145 "Personal Information Taken from Silvia Tirado Bozan de Duran.") Another useful source on this subject is FBI document 124-10169-10073, which was prepared as a compilation of facts on Oswald's trip to Mexico City and his activities while there, and contains a section summarizing the results of the Mexican authorities' investigation.

The purpose of this letter is to address specifically your concerns about evidence that you have interpreted to suggest the existence of an earlier version of Silvia Tirado de Duran's statement made during her first arrest on November 23, 1963 by the DFS. We have asked the CIA and State Department to conduct additional searches to clarify the record. As part of this effort, the State Department, on behalf of the ARRB, sent a request to the Mexican government for copies of all documents it had compiled regarding Oswald's visit to Mexico City. The request specified the following:

"...any and all records relating to the activities of the Mexican authorities described in the diplomatic notes to the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City from the Mexican Secretariat of Foreign Relations No. 504826 dated May 10, 1964 and No. 505503 dated June 9, 1964 including information on Oswald's contacts with Silvia Tirado de Duran; any and all documents that identify American requests to Mexico for information about the assassination and the Mexican responses to those requests; and any and all documents, studies, inquiries or investigations of the assassination by Mexican government entities."

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In response, the Mexican government sent copies of the diplomatic notes exchanged between Mexico and the United States in 1963-64 regarding the initial U.S. request for Mexican documents relevant to the investigation into Lee Harvey Oswald's visit to Mexico in the fall of 1963. These records duplicate copies of the same correspondence found in the Legal Adviser's and Mexico City post files that are included in the Department of State's collection at NARA. The CIA also searched its files for an "original statement" by Silvia Duran, but all searches led back to the Mexican police report of the November 23 arrest which came to be known as the ten-page statement by Silvia Duran. Multiple copies of this report can be found throughout the JFK Collection. This report was in effect a ten-page summary of the statement of Silvia Duran along with those of her husband and the various individuals who were arrested along with the Durans. The CIA concluded that the various descriptions in Agency files of a "statement," or record of "interrogation" probably refer to the same event -- a ten-page report, in Spanish written by the Mexican police as a record of their interrogation of Duran. No record confirming the existence of a verbatim transcript could be found.

An analyst on the staff who handles most of the research on Mexico City has drawn upon your suggestions pertaining to Silvia Duran's interrogation by the DFS to search for additional CIA documents. The analyst researched the available files to identify and locate the earliest-generation records of the arrests and interrogations of Silvia Tirado de Duran to determine whether it would be worthwhile or productive to continue to devote resources to this effort. A copy of an internal memo prepared on this subject is enclosed for your information. Based on what has already been opened to the public and/or reviewed by the Board, no new records revealing a missing version or transcript of Silvia Tirado de Duran's interrogation was found. The signed copy of Duran's testimony, which was included in the Warren Commission Report as part of Exhibit 2121, is believed to be the earliest record of the first arrest on November 23, 1963, but was not made available to U.S. authorities until probably March 1964. Although there were considerable anomalies and inconsistencies among the various accounts of her testimony as you have pointed out in *Deep Politics II*, we did not find any additional documentation of the November 23 arrest. The discrepancies among the existing documents might possibly be explained by the fact that her initial interrogation was not written down exactly verbatim. Duran herself admitted to the HSCA that she did not agree with everything the DFS recorded at the time, yet she was forced to sign the statement regardless.

In light of the interest in Oswald's trip to Mexico City and the importance of Silvia Tirado de Duran's testimony of his visit, the ARRB will pay careful attention to any additional documents pertaining to this subject that come under review.

Once again, we appreciate your contributions to the Review Board and will keep you informed should we come across any new documents or other historical evidence relating to Silvia Duran and the Mexican DFS connection.

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Sincerely,

T. Jeremy Gunn
Executive Director

Enclosures