

MEMORANDUM

July 19, 2017

TO: Jeremy Gunn

FROM: Irene Marr

SUBJECT: Wrap-up Memo on Silvia Tirado de Duran Interrogations by Mexican DFS
The goal of this research project is to ensure that all reasonable steps have been taken to identify and locate the earliest-generation records of the arrests and interrogations of Silvia Tirado de Duran by the Mexican Federal Police, Dirección Federal de Seguridad (DFS), in November 1963. CIA records generally have been interpreted to suggest that Silvia Duran was arrested and interrogated by the DFS on two separate occasions, November 23 and November 27, 1963.¹ Although records on Duran's arrests and interrogations are included in the JFK Collection, the question nevertheless remains whether the Collection includes all of the earliest documentation of her November 1963 statements taken by the DFS.

The specific question, which will be more fully described below, is whether there are any missing records of interrogations related to Duran's November 23 arrest. To wit: was Silvia Tirado de Duran interrogated more than once following that arrest, and is there any other documentation of the Duran interrogations related to that arrest? According to the records now available, in the *immediate aftermath* of President Kennedy's assassination, the CIA's Mexico City station received two written reports from the DFS documenting two separate interrogations of Silvia Duran. The first report was referred to as a "ten-page statement" by Silvia Duran, which was actually a summary prepared by the Mexican police of the November 23 interrogation of Duran. The summary report included not only Silvia's account but also the summarized testimonies of her husband and the Durans' party guests, who reportedly were also brought in for questioning at the time of Silvia's arrest. The second report was the

¹ TX1920, 26 NOV 63, (CIA doc. 104-10015-10357) and MEXI 7364, 12 DEC 63, states "Duran arrested second time 27 Nov., interrogated 28 and released 29 Nov." CIA doc. 1993.08.05.09:02:58:590060.

account of Duran's second arrest on November 28. The accuracy of Duran's November 23 statement is challenged by the release of a different version of that same interrogation provided by Mexican authorities several months later, apparently in response to requests by the Warren Commission. This later version, a Duran-only account bearing her signature, is what ultimately was published as part of the Warren Commission Report. (Given that it is the more detailed account of the November 23 interrogation, and is the only instance of a signed statement by Duran, it is possible that this version served as the source document for the ten-page summary report.) Furthermore, one of the initial CIA cables out of Mexico City contains a reference to Duran having been questioned twice during her November 23 arrest. Thus, two reports possibly could have been written but only one, the summary, was released initially. As will be described below, CIA cables MEXI 7037, MEXI 7046 and TX 1920 indicate that more than one report had been prepared covering the November 23 interrogation.

In order to determine whether there exists an original source document of Duran's first arrest and interrogation, I took the following steps:

- Identified and reviewed key documents concerning the Silvia Duran interrogations that were included in the CIA Sequestered Collection, the Oswald 201 File, and the HSCA staffer notes;
- Searched for reference documents contained in cable traffic passed between CIA Headquarters and the Mexico City Station which contained instructions on handling Silvia Duran and the Oswald investigation in Mexico City;
- Reviewed the Silvia Duran Files in the CIA Microfilm Collection;
- Reviewed the Russ Holmes Files on Silvia Duran and Mexico City to ensure no additional documents or leads pertaining to Duran had been overlooked;
- Submitted requests for additional information regarding Silvia Duran's statement to the CIA; and
- Reviewed copies of communications by the Mexican authorities, including the police report on Duran's statement, that were forwarded in response to Department of State's request to the Mexican Government for additional information on the Kennedy assassination to the Mexican Government.

I. Records Documenting the November 23 Interrogation

There is a proliferation of material on Silvia Tirado de Duran contained within the separate collections of assassination records, including reports covering her dealings with Oswald, phone calls to the

Soviet Consulate, and her arrests and handling by the DFS. The following summary is intended to concentrate on those records that specifically deal with the question of the *November 23 statements*. The principal records and highlights of their contents documenting the November 23 arrest and interrogation are as follows:

MEXI-7029 23 NOV 63: Mexico Station informs HQ that Silvia Duran should be arrested immediately and held incommunicado until she gives all details of Oswald known to her. LITEMPO 2 can say DFS coverage revealed call to him if he needs to explain.²

MEXI-7037 23 NOV 63: Echeverria informed COS that Duran and her husband had already been arrested. He promised all information obtained from Durans. First report should be ready by 2000 Mexico time.³

MEXI-7046 23 NOV 63: Mexico Station informs HQ that Echeverria reported that Duran was completely cooperative and gave written statement attesting to two visits by Oswald. *Note: This was the station's preliminary report and gave a brief synopsis of Duran's testimony, including the statement: "Said he communist and admirer of Castro."* Report also noted that COS will see Echeverria *again* morning 24 Nov.⁴

TX-1920 26 NOV 63: Mexico Station forwards to HQ copy of report prepared by source (LI-4) for LI-2. This appears to be the first transmittal of the ten-page summary, in Spanish, of the results of the interrogation of Duran and the other subjects also detained by DFS. This version was prepared with a cover memo signed by JKB and noted that "source advised he interrogated Silvia Duran on two occasions." (However, by this date, Duran had only been arrested once.) According to this report, Duran stated that Oswald said he was a member of the Fair Play for Cuba, but there was no reference to Duran saying that Oswald was a "communist and admirer of Castro."⁵

² CIA doc. 104-10015-1331 MEXI-7029, 23 NOV 63. The reference to DFS was formerly redacted at the time of Peter Dale Scott's report and 2/26/96 letter to the ARRB on this subject, but has since been released.

³CIA doc. 104-10015-10265

⁴CIA doc. 104-10015-10274

⁵CIA doc. 104-10015-10357

DIR 85758 29 NOV 63: "Rush Translation" of ten-page report by Mexican police interrogation of Silvia Duran disseminated from CIA to White House, DOS, and FBI.⁶

II. Records Documenting a Signed Statement Was Obtained from Duran.

Additional records documenting a different account of Silvia Duran's November 23 interrogation, which were not shared with U.S. authorities at the time of her arrest, first surfaced in March 1964. The version of her November 23 statement provided by the Mexicans in March was the first instance of a Duran-only account. According to a May 18, 1964 extensive FBI report on the known facts concerning Oswald's trip to Mexico and his activities there,⁷ "on March 24, 1964, Captain Fernando Gutierrez Barrios, Assistant Director of the Mexican Federal Security Police, Mexico, D.F.S., made available a copy of a signed statement which had been given by Silvia Duran to the Federal Security Police on November 23, 1963." This information was passed to the CIA on June 8, 1964, under a cover memo from J. Edgar Hoover to the attention of the DDP, then Richard Helms.⁸

MC 105-3702 18 May 64 from Legat to Director, FBI: On March 24, 1964 a copy of a signed statement which had been made by Silvia Duran to the Federal Security Police on November 23, 1963, was made available, according to Mexican authorities. The existence of such a statement was first reported in an FBI summary report of the investigation conducted in Mexico with respect to the travel and activities in Mexico of Lee Harvey Oswald.⁹

Memo for the Record; Fm: David Slawson, Subj: Trip to Mexico City, April 22, 1964

⁶CIA doc. 104-10015-10229

⁷Memo to Director, FBI, from Legat, Mexico 105-3702, 18 May 64. (FBI Doc. 124-10169-10073)

⁸CIA Doc. 104-10003-10023, Memo to Director, CIA, attn; DDP, from Hoover, 5 Jun 64 (located in OSW Box 9, Vol. 37)

⁹FBI doc. 124-10169-10073

The Warren Commission staff trip to Mexico City in April 1964 was intended to gather as much information possible about what investigations were being conducted by the Mexicans with respect to Oswald's activities in and out of Mexico City. As part of this endeavor, Silvia Duran was a subject of particular interest. According to the memo, after lengthy discussions with the FBI on the Duran subject, Slawson learned "[i]t appeared that her signed statement had finally been obtained from the Mexican Police. *Previously the existence of such a statement had not been known. (Author's emphasis.)* We agreed that we would see that later in the day or tomorrow and that it would also be forwarded through channels to the Commission in Washington." Slawson also noted that a request was made for not only a translation of the statement, but a copy of the statement itself.¹⁰

HMMA-23520 26 May 1964: COS Mexico City forwards to CIA HQ a copy of the official "Mexican Government Report on Actions Taken and Investigations Made After the Death of President Kennedy" which will be sent to the Warren Commission. The cover memo notes that the report was a response to the request made to the Mexican Gobernación by the three staff members of the Warren Commission who visited Mexico in April.¹¹ Documentation indicates that the reports were submitted via diplomatic channels. In this version, which was provided in Spanish, the text concerning Silvia Duran was summarized within a confidential memo, but certainly could not be mistaken for an official signed statement. Duran states that she cannot remember whether Oswald said he was a member of the Communist Party. However, she does remember his claiming to be a member of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee and a friend of the Cuban Revolution.

Exhibit 2123, WC Hearings, Vol. XXIV: On June 9, 1964, the Mexican Department of Foreign Affairs transmitted to the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City note No. 505503, which contained supplementary information it had received by "the authorities who conducted the investigation." Most noteworthy was the "certified photostatic copy of the statement made before Mexican authorities on November 23, 1963, by Silvia Tirado Duran," sent as Annex 7. Apparently the Mexican government did not include this item in its initial response to the Warren Commission's request for information on its investigation of Oswald's activities and allegations. It ultimately was published in Volume XXIV of the Warren Commission Hearings as Exhibit 2123. The Spanish version of this photostatic copy bears Silvia Duran's signature along the margins. The English translation was not signed. Subsequent to receiving this report, the Commission ordered a handwriting analysis to verify the authenticity of Duran's signature.

III. Analysis of Available Records to Determine Whether an Original Source Document or Transcript of Duran's Interrogation Exists

¹⁰CIA doc. 104-10086-10254

¹¹CIA doc. 104-10003-10078 HMMA 23520

The question remains as to whether the signed statement provided to the Warren Commission was indeed the only other account of Duran's November 23 arrest by the DFS or whether an earlier version of her interrogation, i.e. a transcript, could possibly exist. The so-called signed statement sometimes has been confused with the ten-page Duran-et al. statement. For example, *The Lopez Report* states "The Mexico City Station forwarded Duran's ten-page signed statement to Headquarters on November 27, 1963," citing cable 7105.¹² However, this report of the Duran statement, was not in fact the signed version. The HSCA staff further alleged in *The Lopez Report* that, when the CIA forwarded to the Warren Commission a copy of Duran's signed statement, the Agency deleted Duran's description of Oswald and excised several of her statements. This may be inaccurate because these particular statements were not part of the signed statement but appeared only in the ten-page statement of Duran-et al., an entirely different document. The version of the Duran-et al. statement that was published in the Warren Commission Report did omit several statements that had appeared in the original, however, when citing these omissions, the HSCA referenced the wrong document. Furthermore, a February 21, 1964 memo from Richard Helms, DDP, to Mr. J Lee Rankin (XAAZ-22759), provides documentary evidence that the CIA did forward to the Warren Commission a full copy of the ten-page Duran-et al. statement and included as attachments DIR 85758 of 29 Nov. 63 and CSCI 3/779, 482 of 10 Jan. 64 which were English translations of the 23 November and 28 November interrogations.¹³ Omissions were taken in the version that was published in the Warren Report, but not due to the CIA's withholding of the full text.

Some of the key differences between the two versions of the November 23 arrest are worth noting. Indeed, if the ten-page Duran-et al. statement was the primary source of information on what Duran told the Mexican authorities, the U.S. authorities were working with a much more limited, if not skewed, account of the Duran story for the first three or four months of the Warren investigation. The later, Duran-only version contains much more detail about how she first heard the news of the assassination and then made the connection that Oswald, the alleged assassin, was the same Oswald who came to the Cuban Consulate to apply for a visa. In this later account, she states she could not remember whether or not he was a member of the Communist Party, but in the ten-page account, there is no mention of her saying anything about Oswald's Communist Party affiliation, just that he was a member of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee. The Duran-only version mentions that Consul Miravel also came into the room during Oswald's display of temper, and that all conversation was conducted in English because Oswald could not speak Spanish. The earlier ten-page version does not contain these statements but does include Duran's recollection of Oswald's physical appearance. Another discrepancy is that, according to the ten-page version, "it was not

¹²The Lopez Report, p. 187. (HSCA doc. 180-10110-10484)

¹³CIA doc. 104-10021-10093, Translations of Interrogation Reports.

within Duran's scope of responsibility to telephone the Consulate of the USSR, and if she did so unofficially, it was to help Oswald." The later version states more emphatically that Duran exceeded her duties in placing the call on Oswald's behalf. As a further example of inconsistency, in the earlier ten-page version, Duran states Oswald never called back, however, according to the later version, she stated that she could not recall whether "Oswald subsequently called her or not on the telephone for the Consulate which she had given him."

Peter Dale Scott alleges in *Deep Politics II* that the significant discrepancies in the story told in the ten-page statement versus what was told in Duran-only signed statement indicate a deliberate falsification of the facts and are evidence of an earlier suppressed account. Furthermore, some of the principal records on this subject can be interpreted to suggest the possibility of additional documentation, including a transcript of an interrogation following the November 23 arrest.

First, CIA's November 26 report (TX-1920) refers to the source having interrogated Duran on *two* occasions. At the time that this report was written, however, Duran had been arrested only once. Thus, at least to the mind of this author, there may have been at least two interrogations resulting from her first detention. This leaves us with the question whether there may have been more than one report of the November 23 arrest (perhaps the existence of a ten-page Duran-et al. statement and a Duran-only statement explains this), or whether the separate interrogations were summarized and recorded in a single document or reported orally by Mexican authorities to the pertinent U.S. Embassy officials. It should be noted that there is actually some evidence indicating that Duran did not participate in a *written* statement. For example, at the time of the Warren Commission visit to Mexico City, Ambassador Mann told the three investigators that he had never seen any papers or formal statements by Silvia Duran; all his information about what she is supposed to have told the Mexican police was received *by word of mouth*, through his aides, Scott and Anderson.¹⁴ Another example is found in the transcript of a 26 November telephone conversation between Cuban President Dorticos and Cuban Ambassador to Mexico Hernandez Armas. This conversation actually provided evidence against the existence of such a written statement by Duran.

Dorticos: Did they try to get a statement from her?

Hernandez: No, no absolutely from what she told me they limited themselves principally to try to find out what relations she had had and her husband with this individual.¹⁵

¹⁴104-10086-10254, Memo: Trip to Mexico City 22 April 1964, p. 23.

¹⁵MEXI 7068 was considered a rush translation of the conversation which was retranslated in May, 1964, at the request of the Mr. Slawson of the Warren Commission, by the CIA's "most able Cuban linguists" in order to ensure that all the nuances were properly captured as this was taken from a very poor telephone connection. This particular part of the conversation was essentially the same

However, there is some textual evidence that there may be a missing “source” document that formed the basis for some of the reports that now exist which should be considered. In fact, according to Silvia Tirado de Duran’s HSCA testimony, she remembered that a stenographer was present during her November 23 interrogation by the DFS. Silvia told the HSCA that she had noticed some inaccuracies in what was actually written down, but she was forced to sign the statement without being able to verify her own words. Based on her testimony to the HSCA, she signed a record of her interrogation by the DFS that did not fully jibe with her actual statement. The absence of a verbatim transcripts suggests some manipulation or possible carelessness on the part of the DFS. This author believes that while there may have been a stenographic copy of the testimony, the certified copy of Duran’s signed statement is the closest approximation of a transcript that exists. The following excerpts from the HSCA interviews¹⁶ by Cornwall, Lopez and Hardway provide evidence for this argument:

Cornwall: During the questioning . . . did they make a verbatim transcript ?
Did they record the conversation or transcribe it?

Tirado: They used a little machine. They say it is a stenograph or something like that.

Cornwall: They made a stenograph record.

Tirado: Yeah, and a man was writing.

Cornwall: All the questions and all the answers?

Tirado: Yes.

Then further into the interview, Edwin Lopez and Dan Hardway revisited this line of questioning. Citing the Warren Commission’s record of what the Mexican authorities had reported, Lopez was attempting to verify the accuracy of what Duran remembered saying herself and what the Mexicans reported she said.

Lopez: And it was probably taken down by a stenographer?

Tirado: Yes.

Lopez: Do you consider this report which is about a page long to be completely fair and accurate and complete?

Tirado: No, because about exceeding my duties and about Azcue speaking about the Russian Revolution, that’s not true.

Lopez: But, my question is, they interrogated you from about four in the afternoon until about twelve at night, and in that process you speak to them for eight whole hours and yet the whole conversation, interrogation, has been reduced

¹⁶HSCA Hearings, Vol. 3, pp. 83-84; 101-102; 111-112.

to one page. Do you consider this accurate? Is it complete?

Tirado: No of course not. Because they ask me a lot of questions that has not been in the Warren. . .

Duran's exchange with Hardway indicates that her November 23 statement may have been misrepresented even at the time that it was recorded:

Hardway: Was the interrogation that was conducted at that time transcribed or taped?

Tirado: It was written and when I sign I read it.

Hardway: Was it written out in a summary form or was it written out as you said it?

Tirado: They change, because once it was a man with a little machine, and another moment it was a man writing, typing.

Hardway: But most of it was taken down literally, as you said it?

Tirado: And with the typewriter.

Hardway: Did you sign that which was taken down as you said it? Or did you sign a summary of that?

Tirado: No, no, no. They were typing all the time. . . *But they didn't write exactly what I said sometimes (author's emphasis)* because when I read all of that bunch of papers they say come on, it's one o'clock, here sign this. I said, no, I'm not going to sign this if I not read it. And sometimes I said this, I didn't say that . . . But almost, it was what I said. But they didn't want to change anything.

Peter Dale Scott has interpreted some of the inconsistencies in the records available thus far as evidence that there still remains an original source document which was somehow withheld by the Mexicans. In *Deep Politics II*, Scott alleges that there are at least four successive versions or falsifications of Silvia Duran's so called statement. According to Scott, these possible falsifications are evidence of the existence of an original "suppressed" version of Duran's statement.

He contends that the November 23 report of Duran's interrogation prepared by the DFS and provided to the U.S. in May or June 1964 was a falsified version deliberately revised to bring her story into line with the Warren Commission lone assassin theory. He detected problems with the initial reporting by the DFS and with the subsequent English translations. The key suppressions he cites are the following:

DFS-1) Scott asserts that the "written statement" first given by the Mexicans to the CIA Station Chief on the night of November 23 and summarized in the Station's cable MEXI 7046 is missing from the record.

Upon reading MEXI 7046, it is ambiguous whether there was an earlier “written statement” given by the Mexicans or whether the “written statement” merely refers to Duran’s account of Oswald’s visits and this eventually was reported after the ten-page summary came to be known as the Duran statement. It is possible that the first report of what the Mexicans had learned from Duran was given orally to the COS, and was then written up formally in the 26 November report. According to CIA cable traffic between headquarters and the Mexico City station, the first *written* report of Duran’s statement was submitted to the station on 26 November. The alleged 23 November report (the certified Duran-only statement) does not surface until May 1964 in the diplomatic notes exchanged between Mexico and the U.S. Department of State¹⁷. This exchange evidently came about as a result of the Mexican government’s cooperation with the United States regarding the Warren Commission investigation into Oswald’s visit to Mexico City.

DFS-2) Scott alleges that Duran’s statement that Oswald said he was a member of the Communist party was suppressed.

As evidence of this possible “suppression” Scott cites the Spanish language version of Duran’s interview which was “forwarded under a memo, still redacted, signed by a JKB.” This is significant because there was no reference to Oswald’s saying he was a Communist. This document is now open in full and the identity of JKB, Jeremy K. Benedum as released in *The Lopez Report*, is no longer classified.¹⁸

Duran’s alleged statement that Oswald said he was a “Communist and admirer of Castro” appears only in Echeverria’s preliminary report of 23 November to the COS in Mexico City (MEXI 7046). In addition, the fact that this cable states Echeverria will call COS again tomorrow suggests that some information was exchanged orally. It is perplexing that the ten-page Duran-et al. statement, the first actual written report of the interrogation, made no overt mention of Oswald’s Communist affiliation, and then contradicted in the later May 1964 report. According to the Spanish version of the Duran-et al. statement of 26 November, Duran states Oswald was a member of the “Fair Play for Cuba,” (*dijo pertenecer al “Trato Justo para Cuba.”*) In the English translation of the 23 November Duran-only statement prepared by DFS but sent to the Department of State in May 1964, “the

¹⁷Responding to ARRB’s request to query the Mexican government for any additional documents concerning the assassination, the U.S. State Department informed ARRB on April 8, 1997 that the Mexicans sent copies of the diplomatic notes exchanged between the two countries in 1963-64 which duplicate copies of the same correspondence in the Mexico post files now in the State collection at NARA.

¹⁸ TX-1920, Doc. 104-10015-10357, see also 180-10110-10484, *The Lopez Report*, p. 239.

declarant could not state -- because she could not remember---whether he said he was a member of the Communist Party.” Perhaps the assertion that Oswald was a Communist was actually an inference drawn from the statement that he was pro-Cuba, a friend of the Revolution and was carrying a membership card for the American Communist Party.

The record indicates that the Warren Commission was interested in establishing whether Silvia Tirado de Duran and her husband were Communists. The Commission requested on September 16, 1964, additional data from the CIA which could be cited in the published report as an authoritative source regarding allegations that Silvia Duran and her husband were or are members of the Communist Party. In response, CIA Headquarters asked the Mexico City Station to provide documentary or other evidence. The Mexico Station forwarded on 19 September the following information from “a high official of the Mexican Government in a position to know the facts: At the time of interrogation by Mexican authorities on the Oswald case, both Silvia Duran and her husband denied they were members of the Partido Comunista Mexicano, Partido Popular Socialista or any communist or Marxist front groups.” Yet, when reporting to the Warren Commission, this information was altered slightly enough possibly to fit in with what the Commission wanted to hear. The information provided by the Mexicans was not communicated to the Warren Commission in the same form in which it had been received. In a memo to J. Lee Rankin from Richard Helms, then DDP, this same information regarding Duran is reported as “A high official of the Mexican Government, in a position to know the facts, has indicated that no Mexican has worked for the Cuban Embassy in Mexico since 1959 who is not a completely convinced Communist. Both Mrs. Duran and her husband were listed in the Mexican security organization’s files as members of the Mexican Communist Party.”¹⁹ Subsequently, in a October 6, 1964 memo for the files from Win Scott, the Chief of Station repeats the same information that Duran and her husband denied that they were members of the Communist Party, but also states that the “high level Mexican official” could be quoted as saying the “no Mexicans except Communists had worked for the Cuban Embassy in Mexico since January 1959.”²⁰ It is interesting that the information stating the Durans’ denial was withheld from the Warren Commission, but the more “incriminating” statement from the Mexican official was put forth. Years later during the HSCA hearings, Duran still held to her story that, although she believed in Socialism, she was not a Communist despite the Mexican police insistence that she was.²¹

DFS-3) Scott alleges that the name Harvey Lee Oswald used by the DFS in the early Spanish versions of the Duran-et al testimonies was deliberately “suppressed” and changed to Lee Harvey Oswald in the subsequent English versions.

¹⁹XAAZ-22760, DD/P 4-4921 Commission File, 22 SEP 64, Doc. #104-10010-10293

²⁰MEXI 0930 19 SEP 64, 104-10086-10155

²¹HSCA Vol. 3, p. 91.

In the Spanish version of the report, Silvia Duran and her husband Horacio Duran Navarro both refer to "Lee Harvey Oswald," while four of the other five other people questioned all denied having known "Harvey Lee Oswald, presumed assassin of the President of the United States." In the English translations of the testimony, the name was corrected, or in Scott's words "replaced," with Lee Harvey Oswald. Scott's rationale that there had to have been an earlier statement is that "So many scattered and unexplained references to 'Harvey Lee Oswald' attest to at least one archetypal document we do not have." The only instances of "Harvey Lee Oswald" that I found occurred in the duplicate copies of the Spanish version of the ten-page statement, it was only changed as a result of the translation into English. The fact that *both* the Spanish and English versions of the statement were being circulated to, *inter alia*, CIA, FBI, Department of State, Secret Service, and the White House might explain the origin of this confusion.

DFS-4) Scott avers that the The Warren Commission version of Duran's statement, dated "November 23," and attested to and signed by Captain Fernando Gutierrez Barrios, was falsified. A photostatic copy of this Spanish-language version certified on May 7, 1964, was transmitted by the Mexican Government to the State Department in a note of June 9, 1964.

The information contained in this report was actually reported on an earlier date. As already discussed above, according to the FBI, on March 24, 1964, DFS made available a copy of a signed statement which had been given by Duran to DFS on November 23, 1963. This statement was forwarded to DCI, attn DDP (Helms) on June 5, 1964 with a cover memo signed by Hoover.²² On June 9, DFS responded to the U.S. Embassy sending the documents pertaining to the investigation of Oswald conducted by the Mexican authorities, listing six documents, with the caveat that they were not to be published either in their entirety or in part without the consent of the Mexican Government.²³

²²Memo fm Hoover to CIA, attn: DDP, 5 JUN 64, 104-10003-10023

²³104-10003-10084, 21 May 64, Dip Note 504826

This other report could explain the earlier reference to the source having interrogated Duran on two occasions during the period of Duran's first arrest. It appears that initially only one report was submitted covering the results of the November 23 arrest. The second arrest took place on 27 November.²⁴ Therefore, even if Duran was questioned twice during the first arrest, there was at the time only one account provided of her interrogation. It is not clear from the documentation why the Mexicans initially withheld the more detailed account of Duran's testimony.

IV. Efforts to Locate Additional Documentation.

In response to Peter Dale Scott's argument that there may be additional documentation of Duran's interrogation following the November 23 arrest, the Review Board conducted a review of all available records on the Duran arrests and interrogations, along with the related reports and memos that were generated by the CIA, FBI and State Department. Furthermore, the Review Board requested the CIA to conduct additional searches for an earlier Duran statement, asked the Mexican government for its records pertaining to this subject, and reviewed the HSCA's efforts in this regard.

All of CIA's efforts to locate another, probably earlier, version of Duran's 23 November interrogation led back to the ten-page Duran-et al. report that exists throughout the collection in both Spanish and in English. The response which the ARRB received from the Mexican government did not allude to any additional documents but included copies of what had been provided to the State Department during the period of the Warren Commission's investigation.

²⁴MEXI 7364, 12 DEC 63 (CIA doc.1993.08.05.09:02:58:590060)

As the Silvia Tirado de Duran story was one of the loose threads pursued by the HSCA investigation in the 1970s, the ARRB reviewed the Committee's own efforts to address this issue with the Mexican authorities during the HSCA's Mexico City trips. When the HSCA investigators made their trip to Mexico City they attempted to gain access to Mexican Government files on the assassination. In their prospectus for Mexican Trip #2, they listed items for which they intended to search, including: stenographic notes taken during the interrogations of Duran-et al., where they exist, and files in the possession of the Mexican officials regarding their investigation in Mexico of the Kennedy assassination.²⁵ HSCA investigators also requested individual files on Silvia Duran and evidence related to Duran's assertion that Oswald's visits to the Cuban Embassy took place on one day only. HSCA staffers provided the Mexican authorities with the names of the Mexican officials who had been involved in the investigation in 1963. The Mexican officials informed the HSCA staff members that most of the data they wanted from the files was in their Security Service files. The HSCA staffers also met with the assistant chief of the Mexican Security Services, Nazar who gave an oral summary of the interviews which Mexican officials conducted in 1963 of Silvia, Horatio, and Ruben Duran, along with Betty Serratos. During the second trip to Mexico, HSCA staffers requested Mexican officials to make Silvia available in Washington for an HSCA hearing. According to the Lopez Report, the Mexicans arranged numerous interviews at the HSCA's request. Although the HSCA gave the Mexicans a list of questions to interview the individuals they were not able to locate during their sojourn, they never sent any interview reports to the Committee. It appears that the HSCA never reached any closure on this matter with the Mexican authorities. When interviewed by the Review Board in October 1996, Ed Lopez recalled that the Mexican police did not keep records and speculated that other reports of Duran's interrogation probably existed but that such records had been destroyed.²⁶

After reviewing the records, following up on Professor Scott's leads, and considering the CIA's response to our request for additional information, no original written statement by Silvia Tirado de Duran nor any form of verbatim transcript, were discovered. It could be inferred from the existing records that the 23 November statement certified by Captain Fernando Gutierrez Barrios, which became Warren Commission Exhibit 2123, was what came to be known as the signed statement of Duran. This is supported by the following observations: the Spanish version bears Silvia Duran's signature in the margins; it is not a summary report; it is the only available account of the 23 November interrogation that was made by Duran only; and contains far more details about Duran's recollections of Oswald than were expressed in the ten-page Duran-et al. statement. The ten-page report of Duran and company's interrogation was in fact a summary report written by the Mexicans but has sometimes been referred to, incorrectly as, a ten-page *statement*. The evidence does not

²⁵180-10110-10147, Working Memo Mexico City Trip #2

²⁶ARRB interview with Ed Lopez, Dan Hardway and Gaeton Fonzi, 10/28/96.

explain, however, why the ten-page statement -- which was really a *summary* of Duran's interrogation and the statements of the other witnesses-- was the first written report provided by the Mexican authorities. Nor does this explain why the longer version, containing Duran-only testimony, was not made available to U.S. authorities, and first reported by the FBI, until March of 1964.

While it appears that efforts to search for an original Duran statement have been exhausted, and the CIA has demonstrated its compliance with the Review Board's request for related information, another possible source of information on Silvia Tirado de Duran remains. This assumption is based on evidence that the CIA speculated that the Cubans knew something about the Duran testimony.

According to a 1975 Counterintelligence (CI) Staff Review, CIA staff speculated that the Cuban Intelligence Service (DGI) could have more in its files than what surfaced in the Duran statements. The Staff Review asserted that "[t]here is no evidence in the Oswald 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." The report further suggested that as it was unlikely that the Duran story could have happened without the knowledge of DGI personnel in the Consulate, and that "Castro's overseas intelligence and security service could have more in its files than was surfaced in the Duran statements."²⁷ The Review Board has, via State Department channels, requested the Cuban government to search its archives for any records relating to the Kennedy assassination. Unless the Cuban government provides additional documentation that sheds further light on this subject, I believe that all existing records pertaining to Silvia Duran have been processed for the Collection and are available to the public in the JFK Collection at the National Archives.

²⁷CIA doc. 104-10103-10280

