

MEMORANDUM

July 5, 2017

TO: Jeremy Gunn

FROM: Irene Marr

SUBJECT: **Research Project- Manuel Calvillo**

Following up on the suggestion of former HSCA investigators Edwin Lopez and Dan Hardway to probe further into the Manuel Calvillo story, I reviewed the HSCA Security Classified Files, HSCA Numbered Files, staffer notes, and the CIA Microfilm Collection on the subject. I found nothing that added anything of substance to the story of Calvillo and Elena Garro de Paz, nor anything that indicated that Calvillo had ever had contact with Lee Harvey Oswald or knowledge of any CIA operation relevant to the assassination. Although I gained additional background information on Calvillo from reviewing the CIA files, this information did not suggest that there were any solid leads to pursue but pointed only to a tenuous, peripheral connection at best.¹ The HSCA notes on Lee Harvey Oswald Activities in Mexico City in the HSCA Security Classified Files, Boxes 4 and 142, contained references to Calvillo in the Elena Garro de Paz interview. As Calvillo's name did not appear in the index to the Numbered Files, I searched through the CIA outside contact reports, interviews, notes and trip reports covering Mexico City. Most of the relevant HSCA records covering this story appear to be part of the CIA Sequestered Collection and are currently under review. The CIA microfilm reel 10, folder 9, and additional classified files in the Microfilm Collection contained information on Calvillo's work as a journalist and some examples of his writing. I requested access to another file I identified from the classified inventory, but it was checked out and had been since July 1996. An HRG staff member is attempting to locate it.

HSCA's interest in investigating Manuel Calvillo's role in the Oswald activities in Mexico City, originated with the Elena Garro de Paz story of seeing Oswald at one of Ruben Duran's "twist parties" in late September or early October 1963. The Committee

¹Any further comments in this regard would have to be reported under separate cover.

believed that Calvillo, who was an unwitting asset of the CIA and apparently one of the first to hear Garro's story immediately after the assassination, could be the key to determining the veracity of her allegations. She claimed to have told her story to Calvillo on November 23, 1963 but according to the Lopez report, the story did not come to the attention of American officials until November 24, 1964 after the release of the Warren Report. Garro was also acquainted with June Cobb, a CIA informant, who was also residing in Mexico City during the time of Oswald's visit. June Cobb was the first to file a report on Ms. Garro and while this provided circumstantial corroboration of the story, the HSCA was never able to interview her. It is not clear whether Calvillo and Cobb had any direct connection with each other.

Although Garro's story was initially dismissed by CIA and FBI officials in Mexico City, Charles Thomas, a political officer with Department of State, took a more serious interest in her allegations. His memo dated December 10, 1965 on his interview with Elena Garro provides another account of Calvillo's involvement and was used in writing up the Lopez report. As Garro told Thomas, the day after the assassination, Elena and her daughter went to the Cuban Embassy and caused a scene, accusing the staff there of being responsible for Kennedy's death. Shortly after this episode they were visited by friend Manuel Calvillo, who was then an official in the Secretariat of Gobernacion, and told them he had orders to escort them to a small and obscure hotel in the center of town. They were kept there for eight days under the pretext that they were in danger. When she told Calvillo she wanted to go to the American Embassy and explain what she knew of Lee Harvey Oswald's connections with Mexican Communists and Cubans, he told her that the American Embassy was full of Communist spies and dissuaded her from reporting what she knew. Among other things he reportedly told Elena was that Silvia Duran had been arrested, which was not public information at the time. She added that Calvillo tried to give the impression that he was an extreme rightist. At that time, Calvillo was known to be an undercover agent for the Secretariat of Gobernacion and to be a personal friend of Gobernacion's Secretary Noe Palomares and former Gobernacion Chief Gustavo Diaz Ordaz.

Elena Garro thought that Calvillo had registered them at the hotel as friends or relatives from San Luis Potosi. She believed that the only people who knew she had been at the hotel were Calvillo and two close friends of his, Ernesto de la Pena and Margarita Michelena. Two other friends of hers who might also have learned of this were June Cobb and Eunice Odio.

The HSCA Committee wanted to more thoroughly investigate all of Lee Harvey Oswald's activities in Mexico City, aside from the visits to the Cuban and Soviet Embassies. In this regard they attempted to interview those individuals who reportedly had contact with Oswald or knowledge of Oswald's visits and associations during his sojourn in Mexico City as well as conduct file reviews. HSCA investigators who went to Mexico City had thought that Calvillo could be a key to

determining the veracity of Ms. Garro's story. However, the Committee's attempt to interview Mr. Calvillo were frustrated.² Additionally, their attempts to bring Garro, who was by then living in Spain, to the U.S. for further questioning never came to fruition.

In attempting to verify Elena Garro's story, the HSCA requested files on all individuals connected to the Oswald visit (Elena Garro de Paz, Elenita Garro de Paz, Manuel Calvillo, Noe W. Palomares, June Cobb Sharp, Victor Rico Galan, Eunice Odio, Sylvia Duran, Lydia Duran, Ruben Duran, Betty Serratos, Horacio Duran, Emilio Carballido, and Eusebio Azcue. They reviewed a number of CIA informant reports and CIA files on LICOOKIE, LICHANT I, LIRING 3, LIHUFF I, and TICHBORN. Though all the names listed above played a role in her story, not one of their files included a reference to Elena Garro de Paz.

Ann Goodpasture was also questioned about Elena Garro's allegations in her testimony to the Committee on 11/20/78.³ She denied knowing any of the sources who were involved in the story and could not shed any further light regarding either the reporting or confirmation of Garro's story to the agency.

After conducting this survey, I conclude that the notes and reports on the Calvillo story to which Lopez and Hardway referred, are already under review as part of the Sequestered Collection. I found no separate files solely on Calvillo in the HSCA collection, he was only mentioned in connection with the Garro de Paz reports. Most of the notes I reviewed in the HSCA numbered files were back up materials and preliminary drafts of what became the Lopez report and no new information was uncovered. I checked the HSCA CIA outside contact reports, but found no mention of Calvillo. I reviewed the Mexico City trip reports and notes which essentially reiterated the same conclusions put forth in the Lopez report. Unless the second file in the CIA microfilm collection on Calvillo referenced above provides anything further, I believe my review of the files on Calvillo is complete. At this stage, any additional leads pursued on Calvillo would most likely fall outside the parameters of the assassination story.

Relevant Documents

180-10141-10494
180-10142-10302
180-10142-10167

²180-10142-1017

³180-10110-10028

180-10142-10190
180-10142-10081
180-10142-10155
180-10142-10199
180-10142-1017
180-10110-10028