

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA

CASE NO: 08-23363 CIV-COOKE/BANKSTRA

SILVIA WILHELM,

Plaintiff,

vs.

CHRIS SIMMONS,

Defendant.

-----/

800 South Douglas Road  
Suite 1498  
Coral Gables, FL 33134  
June 15, 2009  
10:15 a.m. - 5:15 p.m.

DEPOSITION

OF

SILVIA WILHELM

Taken before Nancy Atkins, Court Reporter and  
Notary Public in and for the State of Florida at  
Large pursuant to Notice of Taking Deposition.

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2

## 1 APPEARANCES:

2

3 BRUCE S. ROGOW, ESQ. and  
4 CYNTHIA E. GUNTHER, ESQ.  
5 Broward Financial Centre, Suite 1930  
6 500 East Broward Boulevard  
7 Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33394  
8 on behalf of the Plaintiff.

6

7 REY DORTA, ESQ.  
8 Dorta & Ortega, P.A.  
9 800 S. Douglas Road, Suite 149  
10 Coral Gables, FL 33134  
11 on behalf of the Defendant.

10

11 ALSO PRESENT: Chris Simmons

12 - - - - -

13

## 14 I N D E X

15

SILVIA WILHELM

16

17 Direct Examination Page 4  
18 (By Mr. Dorta)

19 Cross Examination - -  
20 (By Mr. Rogow)

19

20 - - - - -

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22

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## DEFENDANT'S EXHIBITS

Ex/Page	Description
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1/92 Plaintiff's Answers to  
Interrogatories

2/122 Florida Division of Corporations  
printout on Comision  
Cubana-Americana Por Derechos  
Familiares, Inc.

printout on Comision  
Cubana-Americana Por Derechos  
Familiares, Inc.

8

3/236      Brochure on First International  
Symposium on Gender and Health

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23  
24  
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1 Thereupon,  
2           SILVIA WILHELM,  
3 was called as a witness by the Defendant, and  
4 having been first duly sworn, was examined and  
5 testified as follows:

6           DIRECT EXAMINATION

7 BY MR. DORTA:

8       Q   Can you please state your name.

9       A   Silvia Wilhelm.

10      Q   Ms. Wilhelm, have you ever given a  
11 deposition before?

12      A   Never.

13      Q   This is your first time?

14      A   This is my first time.

15      Q   Couple of ground rules regarding a  
16 deposition. I'm going to ask you a series of  
17 questions; you answer them as best you can. If at  
18 any time you don't understand my question,

19 probably because it's a bad question, just let me  
20 know and I'll rephrase the question. If you  
21 answer a question, I'm going to take it you  
22 understood the question. Is that fair?  
23 A Fair enough.  
24 Q The court reporter to your left is  
25 taking down everything you are saying. She can't

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5

1 take down nods of the head, she can't take down  
2 um-hmm's and uh-huh's. She can take it down but  
3 it doesn't make any sense. Therefore I need you  
4 to give your answers out loud and verbal, okay?  
5 A Okay.  
6 Q The last thing is, we both can't  
7 speak at the same time and there will be a time  
8 where you want to give your answer but I want to  
9 finish my question, so I'm going to ask you to  
10 please to let me finish my question before you  
11 start your answer, okay?  
12 A Fair enough.  
13 Q What is your date of birth?  
14 A June 22, 1946.  
15 Q Where were you born?  
16 A Havana, Cuba.

17 Q When did you come to the United  
18 States?

19 A I came to the United States in  
20 January of 1961.

21 Q Did you come by yourself, with your  
22 parents?

23 A I am one of the Pedro Pan children.  
24 I came by myself.

25 Q Did your parents ever join you?

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1 A They certainly did.

2 Q When was that?

3 A My mother joined me in September of  
4 1961. My father deceased when I was seven years  
5 old, sir.

6 Q What was your father's name?

7 A Luis Hernandez Milenas.

8 Q How did your father die?

9 A My father died in a car accident in  
10 1953 in Biombo, Cuba.

11 Q What is your mother's name?

12 A Silvia Teurbe Tolon.

13 Q Did you come directly to Miami?

14 A I came directly to Miami, yes, I

15 did.

16 Q Did you ever live in any other city  
17 other than Miami or the country Cuba?

18 A I certainly have lived in cities  
19 other than Miami. I lived as a Pedro Pan in  
20 Buffalo, New York and Olean, New York. I have  
21 lived in Atlanta, Georgia. Well, Marietta, the  
22 suburb of Atlanta. I have lived in Clearwater,  
23 Florida. I have lived in Washington, D.C. and I  
24 have lived in Miami. And of course in Havana,  
25 where I spent fourteen years of my life.

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1 Q Do you still have family in Cuba?

2 A Yes, I do.

3 Q I know in the Interrogatories you  
4 listed a whole host of individuals in Cuba. Could  
5 you give me, indicate who you still have in Cuba  
6 currently?

7 A I have a half brother with his wife,  
8 his daughter, his granddaughters and --  
9 granddaughter and grandson, great grandchildren.

10 Q Let me stop you there. What is his  
11 name?

12 A Luis Hernandez Milenas, like my

13 father.

14 Q Okay.

15 A I have the son of a first cousin of

16 mine in Havana with his wife and child.

17 Q What is his name?

18 A Rafael Guerra Teurbe Tolon.

19 Q Who else?

20 A Who else? Family?

21 Q Yes, ma'am.

22 A No, nobody else.

23 Q So other than your half brother and

24 your first cousin --

25 A Right, and their families.

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1 Q And their respective families?

2 A Exactly.

3 Q What does Luis Hernandez do in Cuba?

4 A He is retired. He is in very bad

5 health. He is retired.

6 Q What did he do prior to retirement,  
7 if you know?

8 A I think he worked in the agriculture  
9 sector. He is from a rural area called Contra  
10 Maestre in Oriente.



11 Q Prior to doing that, do you know

12 what he did?

13 A I have no idea.

14 Q Your first cousin; what, if

15 anything, did he do in Cuba?

16 A He basically does the black market

17 to survive.

18 Q Have either of them ever held a

19 government position, as far as you know?

20 A I cannot hear your question.

21 Q Have either of them held a

22 government position, to your knowledge?

23 A Not to my knowledge.

24 Q When I say a government position, I

25 mean the Government of Cuba.

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1 A Well, I imagine so.

2 Q Just to be clear.

3 A If they live in Cuba.

4 Not to my knowledge.

5 Q Have either of them ever held a

6 position in the Cuban Armed Forces?

7 A Not to my knowledge.

8 Q Have either of them, to your

9 knowledge, ever been involved in Cuban

10 Intelligence?

11 A Not to my knowledge.

12 Q Has any family member ever held a

13 position, of your family, within the Cuban Armed

14 Forces?

15 A Not to my knowledge.

16 Q Has any family member held a

17 governmental position with the current Cuban

18 government?

19 A Not to my knowledge.

20 Q What is the highest level of

21 education you have completed?

22 A I have an Associates degree from

23 Miami-Dade and then I have many more courses at

24 the University of Miami and American University in

25 Washington, D.C.

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1 Q Highest grade would be an

2 Associates?

3 A Yes, in science.

4 Q What year was that?

5 A Oh, my goodness. 1964.

6 Q What is the highest level of

7 education you completed in Cuba?

8 A The eighth grade. No, no, no, no,

9 no, no. No, take it back, take it back. Probably

10 the tenth grade, the tenth grade, the tenth grade.

11 Q You indicated you did some courses

12 at the University of Miami. Can you tell me about

13 those?

14 A Yes. I worked at the University of

15 Miami and I took courses in education. I wanted

16 to be a teacher.

17 Q When is that?

18 A 1966, '67.

19 Q Was that the last time you took

20 courses -- I'm assuming that that's for a

21 Bachelor's degree?

22 A No. My last time was at American

23 University in Washington, D.C.

24 Q Let me go back. When you were going

25 to the University of Miami and you were doing the

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1 education classes that you indicated you took,

2 that was to get a Bachelor's degree?

3 A To get a Bachelor's degree.

4 Q And you had other classes from other

5 universities other than the University of Miami?

6 A Yes.

7 Q What other schools have you gone to?

8 A American University in Washington,

9 D.C.

10 Q When was that?

11 A That was in 1995, '96.

12 Q Any classes at any institutions from

13 1967 to 1995?

14 A Yes. I went to Clearwater Community

15 College while I lived in Tampa, took sociology

16 classes. I was interested in sociology.

17 Q What year was that, approximately?

18 A '77, '78 when we lived there.

19 Q Okay. Other than University of

20 Miami, Clearwater Community College --

21 A I said --

22 Q Other than University of Miami,

23 Clearwater Community College, Miami-Dade Community

24 College and American University, have you attended

25 any other higher institutions?

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1 A No, that's it.

2 Q Where do you currently live?

3       A    On Brickell Avenue.

4       Q    What is your address?

5       A    1925 Brickell Avenue.

6       Q    Is that a house or apartment?

7       A    Townhouse, 17.

8       Q    No. 17?

9       A    Yes.

10      Q    How long have you lived at that

11 address?

12      A    Probably seventeen years. We moved

13 there right after Andrew, so it must be seventeen,

14 eighteen years ago.

15      Q    So that would be 1991?

16      A    Right after Andrew.

17      Q    Who lives at that address with you?

18      A    My husband.

19      Q    Anyone else other than your husband

20 and yourself?

21      A    Nobody else.

22      Q    Prior to living at that address,

23 seventeen years ago, where did you live?

24      A    I lived, one year I rented an

25 apartment on Key Biscayne.

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1 Q What year was that?

2 A That was right after Andrew because

3 we rented because we sold our house --

4 Q Okay.

5 A -- as a result of Andrew. And

6 before that I lived seven years on Stewart Avenue

7 in the Grove.

8 Q Do you remember the address on

9 Stewart Avenue?

10 A I think it's 2820 Stewart Avenue,

11 but I'm not absolutely sure.

12 Q From what year to what year would

13 you say you lived on Stewart Avenue?

14 A I lived in Stewart Avenue -- let's

15 see. We moved to Miami in '86. I lived in

16 Stewart Avenue from '87 to Andrew.

17 Q Where did you move to Miami from?

18 A Marietta, Georgia.

19 Q From when to when did you live in

20 Marietta, Georgia?

21 A I lived in Marietta, Georgia the

22 first time around from 1972 to 1977. Then we

23 moved to Clearwater, Florida. We lived there from

24 '77 to '79 and from '79 to '86 we lived back in

25 Marietta, Georgia. So on and off, maybe fourteen

1 years.

2 Q When you say we --

3 A My husband and I and my family.

4 Q I realize that you are very anxious  
5 to answer my questions, but please wait for me to  
6 finish. The only reason I say this, so you  
7 understand the question before you answer. And  
8 really, she gets mad at me and she throws the  
9 machine at me if I don't correct you, so just let  
10 me finish my question.

11 A Okay.

12 Q Just let me finish my question.

13 How long have you been married?

14 A Thirty-eight years in September.

15 Q Congratulations. What is your  
16 husband's name?

17 A Charles C. Wilhelm.

18 Q When you say we, when you said we to  
19 all the addresses in Marietta, all the places in  
20 Marietta, Clearwater, back to Marietta, that was  
21 with Charles?

22 A With Charles and my children.

23 Q What was the purpose of the moving  
24 from Marietta to Clearwater, back to Marietta?  
25 Was there a reason for that?

1 A My husband's profession.

2 Q What does he do?

3 A He is a physician.

4 Q What kind of physician?

5 A He is an internist.

6 Q You indicated you moved to the  
7 Stewart Avenue address sometime in '87. Prior to  
8 that you were living in Marietta. Do you remember  
9 the address where you lived in Marietta from '79  
10 to --

11 A Keeler Woods Drive was the name of  
12 the street but I don't remember the number.

13 Q And Dr. Wilhelm was practicing in  
14 Marietta at that time, between '79 and '86?

15 A He was practicing medicine at the  
16 time.

17 Q Where did he practice, if you know?

18 A Kennestone Hospital.

19 Q Can you spell that for me?

20 A K-e-n-n-e-s-t-o-n-e.

21 Q Did you work during that time?

22 A Yes, I did.

23 Q What did you do between '79 and '86



24 while you were living in Marietta?

25 A Between '79 and '86, the first two

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1 years I ran my husband's practice, I was the  
2 manager, and after that I worked in the travel  
3 industry.

4 Q What did you do in the travel  
5 industry?

6 A I did group sales with Marietta  
7 Travel and then I had my own company called Corp  
8 Events.

9 Q What was it called, I'm sorry?

10 A Corp Events.

11 Q Prior to living in Marietta, you  
12 indicated you lived in Clearwater from '77 to '79.  
13 Did you live in Clearwater as well because of your  
14 husband's profession?

15 A Because of my husband's profession.

16 Q Did he practice in Clearwater?

17 A He did not practice medicine in  
18 Clearwater. He was in the HMO industry.

19 Q What did he do for the HMO industry?

20 A He opened the first CIGNA HMO in the  
21 State of Florida.

22 Q What was your maiden name?  
23 A Silvia Hernandez de Teurbe Tolon.  
24 Q Have you been known by any other  
25 names other than Silvia Hernandez de Teurbe Tolon

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1 or Silvia Wilhelm?

2 A In my swimming team I used to be  
3 called Flippity. So a lot of people from my youth  
4 know me from that name because I was a very good  
5 swimmer.

6 Q Did you swim here in the United  
7 States or in Cuba?

8 A I swam competitively in Cuba.

9 Q At what age?

10 A Started when I was five and I ended  
11 when I left at the age of fourteen.

12 Q Ever swim competitively in the  
13 United States?

14 A No, I did not.

15 Q Going back to Dr. Wilhelm and  
16 Clearwater, you indicated he was one of the  
17 pioneers of the HMO industry?

18 A Yes, he was.

19 Q Or involved in HMO?

20 A Um-hmm.

21 Q So you indicated he did not practice  
22 in Clearwater but yet he worked at a company?

23 A He worked for this company, Prepaid  
24 Healthcare, I believe was the name.

25 Q Would he practice medicine for them?

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1 A He did not practice medicine. He  
2 was doing administrative work.

3 Q Prior to living in Clearwater from  
4 '77 to '79 you indicated you lived in Marietta  
5 from '72 to '77. Was that also because of  
6 Dr. Wilhelm's practice?

7 A Absolutely.

8 Q Where did Dr. Wilhelm work from 1972  
9 to 1977?

10 A He had his own private practice of  
11 medicine.

12 Q Did you work with him at that time  
13 between '72 and '77?

14 A Yes, I certainly did. I ran his  
15 practice part of the time.

16 Q What did you do the other part?

17 A Took care of five children.

18 Q Five children?  
19 A Yes, sir.  
20 Q Prior to living in Marietta from '72  
21 to '77, where did you live?  
22 A I lived in Miami.  
23 Q From when to when did you live in  
24 Miami?  
25 A I lived in Miami from September of

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1 1961 to August of 1972.  
2 Q And during that time you met  
3 Mr. Wilhelm, or Dr. Wilhelm?  
4 A No, I had -- I was married before.  
5 In 1965 I was married.  
6 Q A prior marriage?  
7 A A prior marriage.  
8 Q Who were you priorly married to,  
9 married to prior?  
10 A Gabino Diaz.  
11 Q How long did that marriage last?  
12 A Seven years.  
13 Q Any children as a product of that  
14 marriage?  
15 A Two children.

16 Q What are their ages?  
17 A Forty-two and thirty-seven.  
18 Q Forty-two year old is a male or  
19 female?  
20 A Female.  
21 Q What does she do?  
22 A Right now she is a housewife and a  
23 mother.  
24 Q And your thirty-seven year old, male  
25 or female?

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1 A Male.  
2 Q What does he do?  
3 A He is a principal of a high school  
4 in Miami.  
5 Q What high school?  
6 A American High School.  
7 Q Where did you meet Gabino Diaz?  
8 A I met Gabino Diaz at the Agrupacion  
9 Catolica University.  
10 Q All she needs is the spelling at  
11 this point, so if there is a complicated name, if  
12 you can just write it down, it would be great, if  
13 your attorney doesn't mind.

14 A You want me to write it now?

15 Q That would be great. What is it

16 again, so I know?

17 A Agrupacion Catolica University.

18 Q What was that?

19 A This is a group of male -- basically

20 a male group brought over from Cuba that are

21 university students, Catholic university students,

22 and I was in an organization called La Rosa

23 Mistica -- let me write it down quick. And we

24 used to have social gatherings.

25 Q From what year to what year were you

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1 in La Rosa Mistica?

2 A I was in La Rosa Mistica from 1961

3 probably through 1970.

4 Q And the purpose of La Rosa Mistica

5 was a social group?

6 A Social group, but also to keep our

7 Catholic faith firm and revitalized, et cetera.

8 Q And the Agrup --

9 A Agrupacion Catolica University.

10 Q Thank you. That particular group,

11 you said, was university students from Cuba who

12 came to the United States?

13 A Or were in university here in the  
14 United States.

15 Q And that group was just basically  
16 the same purpose as La Rosa?

17 A Exactly.

18 Q But only for men?

19 A That was for men, La Rosa was for  
20 women.

21 Q So you met Mr. Diaz during one of  
22 the social gatherings?

23 A Exactly.

24 Q So he was a member of the group?

25 A Right.

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1 Q You married him in what year, I'm  
2 sorry?

3 A I married him the 22nd of May, 1965.

4 Q When did you divorce Mr. Diaz?

5 A I divorced him in probably July,  
6 June or July, 1972.

7 Q One the things that I didn't say  
8 prior, because I'm going to ask you questions  
9 about the divorce is, I'm not meaning to pry in

10 any way into your personal life. You brought an  
11 action and I have a right to ask questions, so in  
12 no way am I trying to invade your privacy.

13 If at any time you believe it's a  
14 sensitive topic, just let me know and I'll sort of  
15 ask questions with regards to the sensitivity of  
16 the topic but --

17 A No problem.

18 Q But I'm going to ask you, for  
19 instance, why you divorced Mr. Diaz. And some  
20 people don't like talking about that, but I bring  
21 it to your attention simply because I'm not trying  
22 to pry.

23 Why did you divorce Mr. Diaz?

24 A Why did I divorce Mr. Diaz?

25 Q Yes, ma'am.

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1 A Because we were totally  
2 incompatible.

3 Q What do you mean?

4 A I did not appreciate living with  
5 him. He was a selfish liar.

6 Q And is there any other reasons?

7 MR. ROGOW: That isn't enough?



8 THE WITNESS: You want me to be  
9 totally honest, I'll be happy to.

10 BY MR. DORTA:

11 Q Don't hold back.

12 A I'm not going to hold back.

13 Q Any other reasons other than that he  
14 was a selfish liar and you were incompatible?

15 A I think that's enough.

16 Q When did you meet Dr. Wilhelm?

17 A I met Dr. Wilhelm at Jackson  
18 Memorial Hospital.

19 Q When was that?

20 A That was in 1970.

21 Q When did you marry Dr. Wilhelm?

22 A I married him September 1, 1972.

23 Q And you have three children with  
24 him?

25 A I have one child with him.

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1 Q Okay. You have one child was  
2 Dr. Wilhelm?

3 A Um-hmm.

4 Q And what is that age of that child?

5 A She is thirty-six.

6 Q Thirty-six?

7 A Um-hmm.

8 Q Dr. Wilhelm had two kids from a  
9 prior marriage?

10 A Exactly.

11 Q How old are they?

12 A Forty-four and forty-one.

13 Q Thirty-six year old, what does she  
14 do?

15 A The thirty-six year old lives in  
16 Ocala, Florida.

17 Q Doing what?

18 A She is a psychologist and a nurse.

19 She is director of clinical procedures for a home  
20 health care agency in Ocala.

21 Q Forty-four year old, is that a male  
22 or female?

23 A The forty-four year old is a male.

24 Q What does he do?

25 A He is a restaurant owner.

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1 Q Local?

2 A No, in Marietta, Georgia.

3 Q Forty-one year old, what does he or

4 she?

5 A She.

6 Q What does she do?

7 A She is -- she stays at home. She

8 was diagnosed as a schizophrenic many years ago.

9 Q Do you have any grandchildren?

10 A Yes, I do.

11 Q How many?

12 A Five.

13 Q Congratulations there, too.

14 A Thank you.

15 Q Are they under the age of eighteen?

16 A Yes.

17 Q You testified earlier in your

18 deposition that you have lived in Washington,

19 D.C.. When have you lived in Washington, D.C.?

20 A I lived in Washington, I believe

21 it was '95 to '97. 1995 to 1997.

22 Q What brought you to Washington

23 D.C. from 1995 to '97?

24 A My husband's job.

25 Q His practice? Then he moved from

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2 A Yes.

3 Q What took him to Washington in '95?

4 A He was given the position of medical  
5 director for Principal Health Care nationwide and  
6 the main offices were in Rockville, Maryland,  
7 which is a suburb of Washington.

8 Q Did you work while you were in  
9 Washington?

10 A I went back to school. I went to  
11 American University.

12 Q You studied what?

13 A School of International Service.

14 Q Did you work anywhere during the  
15 time from 1997 to --

16 A No, I did not.

17 Q You were just a student at American  
18 University?

19 A Yes, I was.

20 Q Remember, let me finish my question.

21 Where was Charles born?

22 A He was born in San Bernardino,  
23 California.

24 Q What is his date of birth?

25 A November 10th, 1940.

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1 Q Do you have any email accounts  
2 currently?

3 A Yes, I do.

4 Q What are they?

5 A Cubapunte. Cuba, the country,  
6 P-u-e-n-t-e, at aol.com and smw646@aol.com.

7 Q Other than those two email accounts,  
8 do you have any other email accounts currently?

9 A That are mine?

10 Q Yes, ma'am.

11 A No.

12 Q Prior to that, have you ever had any  
13 other email accounts?

14 A Those are my two email accounts.

15 Q Only, ever?

16 A You are not talking about my  
17 husband's accounts?

18 Q Silvia Wilhelm.

19 A Okay, right.

20 Q Do you have any accounts or email  
21 accounts jointly with your husband?

22 A We use the csw72@AOL.COM a lot of  
23 times jointly.

24 Q Prior to that, you never had any  
25 email accounts?

1 A No.

2 Q You met Charles in San -- I'm sorry,  
3 he was born in San Bernardino, California. Has  
4 Charles ever been in the military?

5 A Yes, he was.

6 Q When was he in the military?

7 A During the Vietnam years.

8 Q Is he retired from the military?

9 A He was just drafted during Vietnam  
10 and he serve in the Air Force during Vietnam, the  
11 flight surgeons of the Air Force.

12 Q How many tours of duty did he do, if  
13 you know?

14 A Only that.

15 Q Only one tour? Do you know what  
16 year it was?

17 A Okay, let me think. They must have  
18 been '68 to '70. It must have been '68 to '70.

19 Q So you met him right when he got out  
20 of the service?

21 A Yes, I did.

22 Q He was not still in the service when  
23 you met him?

24 A No.

25 Q Is he in the Reserves currently?

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1 A No.

2 Q Has he ever been in the Reserves?

3 A Not that I know.

4 Q Was he discharged -- is there an  
5 honorable discharge?

6 A He has a Commendation medal from the  
7 Air Force. He was, you know, decorated for his  
8 service.

9 Q I'm asking because I don't know the  
10 answer, obviously. When you are drafted, is there  
11 an honorable discharge that comes at the end of  
12 that or do they just say thank you, goodbye,  
13 you are finished?

14 A I believe there is an honorable  
15 discharge. In his case in addition to that he got  
16 the Commendation from the Air Force for  
17 distinguished service.

18 Q Has Charles ever worked for any  
19 local, state or national government?

20 A No.

21 Q What was his last rank, if you know?

22 A Last rank?

- 23 Q His last rank in the Air Force.
- 24 A I believe captain.
- 25 Q Has Charles ever traveled to Cuba

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- 1 with you?
- 2 A Yes.
- 3 Q How many times?
- 4 A Probably one, two, three. Probably
- 5 four times.
- 6 Q Most recent time was when, traveled
- 7 with Charles?
- 8 A With me, January of this year.
- 9 Q Has he ever gone without you?
- 10 A He went once without me.
- 11 Q When was that?
- 12 A About seven or eight years ago.
- 13 Q Does he have any family in Cuba?
- 14 A My family is his family.
- 15 Q His personal family.
- 16 A No.
- 17 Q Is there a reason why he went to
- 18 Cuba without you?
- 19 A Yes.
- 20 Q Why?



21       A    He sailed to Cuba.  
22       Q    On a boat?  
23       A    On a boat.  
24       Q    His boat?  
25       A    No, a friend's boat.

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1       Q    Was there a purpose to this trip to  
2 Cuba on a friend's boat?  
3       A    They wanted to do it.  
4       Q    Who is the friend?  
5       A    Cliff Donnally.  
6       Q    What kind of boat is it, if you  
7 know?  
8       A    It was -- I don't know, a forty-nine  
9 or fifty-one -- I don't know. I'm not a sailor.  
10      Q    Who traveled on that boat, if you  
11 know, other than Cliff and Dr. Wilhelm?  
12      A    Excuse me, I did not hear the  
13 question.  
14      Q    Who traveled on that boat? Who else  
15 was on that boat other than Cliff and Dr. Wilhelm?  
16      A    A friend of Cliff's, and I don't  
17 know his name.  
18      Q    How do you go about sailing a boat

19 to Cuba? Don't you get shot by the military as  
20 you are approaching their borders?

21 A Of course not.

22 Q How do you go about doing that?

23 A You get your GPS going and you  
24 contact the Cuban authorities at a reasonable  
25 distance to see if they will allow you in or not.

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1 And if they do, you enter the marina.

2 Q Do you know what marina they  
3 entered?

4 A Marina Hemingway.

5 Q Other than just wanting to always do  
6 it, was there any other reason for the trip, as  
7 far as you know?

8 A Not as far as I know.

9 Q Why did you not accompany him  
10 on this trip?

11 A Cuban-Americans are not allowed to  
12 enter Cuba by sea.

13 Q Is this a United States law or a  
14 Cuban law?

15 A It is a Cuban law.

16 Q You indicated that he had traveled

17 to Cuba on four occasions. You mentioned one time  
18 in January, 2009 and another one eight years ago.  
19 When was the time before that?  
20 A I'm trying to think. The first time  
21 he went was in 1996. I know he went to Camaguey  
22 with me once. I know he went to Oriente with me  
23 once. I know he went on the sailboat once and I  
24 know he went in January once, so we are talking  
25 about five times.

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1 Q January of 2009 was the last time  
2 that you were in Cuba?

3 A Yes. No. I was in Cuba in April of  
4 2009.

5 Q The last time you were in Cuba with  
6 Dr. Wilhelm would have been in January, 2009?

7 A Correct.

8 Q And the time before that that you  
9 were both together in Cuba, approximately what  
10 year would that have been?

11 A It would have been after -- add to  
12 the list I gave you on him, October, 2007.

13 Q That would have been the time to  
14 Oriente?

15 A No, that was also to Havana.

16 Q The time you went to Oriente would  
17 have been the '96 trip?

18 A No, no, no. The '96 trip was to  
19 Havana the first time he went to Cuba with me and  
20 that was strictly Havana. Oriente was -- it must  
21 have been seven years ago. We went to a Health  
22 Congress in Oriente, in Santiago, and he went with  
23 me.

24 Q And the sailboat trip was the year  
25 after or the same year?

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1 A No, it was after that.

2 Q Other than those four occasions, was  
3 there any other time that you know of Dr. Wilhelm  
4 going to Cuba?

5 A I think I gave you six.

6 Q I'm sorry, I thought you had said  
7 four originally and then --

8 A When I started giving you the -- my  
9 memory, I think I got up to six.

10 Q No problem.

11 A I think I got up to six.

12 Q No problem. I'm going to now

13 separate them because I was listing them together.

14 A Right.

15 Q 1996, you went to Havana and that

16 was his first trip, that was your first trip

17 together, yes?

18 A First trip together.

19 Q Then we have the very next trip

20 would have been Oriente and Camaguey, or Camaguey

21 and Oriente were separate?

22 A Camaguey and Oriente were separate.

23 Oriente came first.

24 Q When was the Oriente trip, or the

25 trip that you ended up going to Oriente?

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1 A Seven or eight years ago.

2 Q And then after Oriente was the

3 Camaguey trip?

4 A Yes, and that was four or five years

5 ago. I would have to look at exact dates.

6 Q And then between Oriente and

7 Camaguey came the sailboat trip?

8 A Between Oriente and Camaguey, the

9 sailboat trip.

10 Q Then after Camaguey we have -- what

11 do we have after that?

12 A He went in 2007, in October, with  
13 me.

14 Q That was for the health conference  
15 thing, you said?

16 A No, no, that was in Oriente.

17 Q Okay. 2007?

18 A Yes. And then the last one was  
19 January, 2009.

20 Q Okay. Do you currently own your own  
21 home?

22 A Yes.

23 Q Do you own any other property other  
24 than your home?

25 A Yes.

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1 Q What other properties do you own?

2 A We own a house in Highlands, North  
3 Carolina.

4 Q Since when have you had that  
5 property?

6 A It was given to my husband by his  
7 father in his will and he died twenty-some years  
8 ago.

9 Q Other than the house in Highlands,  
10 North Carolina, any other property outside your  
11 home here in Miami?

12 A No.

13 Q How many bank accounts do you  
14 currently have?

15 A I have two bank accounts.

16 Q What bank institutions do you have  
17 your bank accounts?

18 A I have three bank accounts. The  
19 Coconut Grove Bank.

20 Q All three accounts?

21 A All three accounts.

22 Q And the three accounts would be a  
23 checking, saving and a retirement?

24 A No.

25 Q Tell me what they are.

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1 A Okay. Checking and then two  
2 organizations that I represent, their accounts.

3 Q You personally have only a checking  
4 account in the Coconut Grove Bank?

5 A One, yes, for me.

6 Q How long have you banked at the

7 Coconut Grove Bank?

8 A On and off since 1965.

9 Q Dr. Wilhelm, does he share the  
10 checking account with you or is it only your name  
11 alone?

12 A This particular one is under my name  
13 alone. We have one together.

14 Q What bank is that?

15 A Coconut Grove Bank.

16 Q Do you have any other accounts under  
17 your name by yourself other than the one in  
18 Coconut Grove Bank?

19 A No.

20 Q Do you have any other bank accounts  
21 other than the one with Dr. Wilhelm at Coconut  
22 Grove Bank jointly?

23 A No.

24 Q Do you have any other bank accounts,  
25 whether it's yours or your organization's, in any

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1 other bank other than Coconut Grove Bank?

2 A No.

3 Q Have you ever had any other bank  
4 accounts other than those in Coconut Grove Bank



5 personally, Silvia Wilhelm?

6 A When I lived in Atlanta, Marietta.

7 Q What banks did you have at Marietta,  
8 if you know?

9 A I don't remember.

10 Q So when you said on and off Coconut  
11 Grove Bank, aside from the time you were in  
12 Marietta, it was always Coconut Grove Bank?

13 A (Witness nods head in the  
14 affirmative).

15 Q Is that a yes?

16 A Right.

17 Q Do you have an investment or  
18 retirement account?

19 A No.

20 Q Do you have any bank accounts  
21 outside the United States?

22 A No.

23 Q Where do you currently work?

24 A I am the executive director of  
25 Puentes Cubanos and the Cuban-American Commission

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1 for Family Rights.

2 Q Are those two separate

3 organizations?

4 A Two separate organizations.

5 Q What is your position at the

6 Cuban-American Commission for Family Rights?

7 A Executive director.

8 Q How long have you had this position?

9 A Since 2004.

10 Q Who had that position before you?

11 A Nobody.

12 Q Have you ever held any other

13 position other than executive director at the

14 Cuban-American Commission for Family Rights?

15 A No.

16 Q Is this a nonprofit corporation?

17 A Not-for-profit corporation, yes.

18 Q Who are the officers for that

19 particular not-for-profit corporation?

20 A Who are they?

21 Q Yes, ma'am.

22 A Alvaro Fernandez, Ileana Casanova,

23 Eliz Cerejido, Aidil Oscaril, Jose Rodriguez,

24 Alfredo Duran, Jose Rodriguez.

25 Q Did you start this company yourself?

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1       A    I was part of the group that opened  
2 the organization.

3       Q    And the group that opened it with  
4 you would be the names you just mentioned?

5       A    There were other names at the time.

6       Q    So from its inception you have been  
7 involved in this?

8       A    I have been involved since inception  
9 in June of 2004.

10      Q    How do you obtain funding for this  
11 group?

12      A    Membership.

13      Q    What kind of group is it?

14      A    It is a group that was formed to  
15 protest the travel regulations on Cuban-Americans'  
16 travel to the island, family travel to the island.

17      Q    Is it a lobbying group?

18      A    No, it's not a lobbying group.

19      Q    What is the purpose of the group?

20      A    Educate the community and educate  
21 Washington as to the cruelty of the regulations.

22      Q    Educate me.

23      A    Excuse me?

24      Q    Educate me about the cruelty of the  
25 regulations. What is it you mean by that?

1       A    Okay. I mean that when our  
2   government, the United States of America, passes a  
3   law that says that I cannot visit my mother for  
4   three years and there are no instances for  
5   humanitarian reasons that I can visit my mother, I  
6   consider that to be cruel.

7       Q    Okay.

8       A    That is no longer the case, because  
9   President Obama has revoked the regulations. I  
10   believe it was in this year, either March of this  
11   year, he revoked these regulations.

12      Q    Okay.

13      A    And we thank him for it.

14      Q    Is the group still in existence?

15      A    The group is still in existence.

16      Q    Fair to say that the purpose of the  
17   group which was to protest, I guess, or educate  
18   the community with regard to --

19      A    And Washington.

20      Q    And Washington, with regards to the  
21   travel restrictions, that has now basically met  
22   its goal?

23      A    Um-hmm.

24      Q    Yes?

25      A    It met one of the goals.

1 Q Does it have other goals other the  
2 travel restrictions?

3 A It has other goals.

4 Q Like?

5 A To make sure that the prices for  
6 these family members to go visit their families in  
7 Cuba are reasonable prices. Right now they are  
8 extremely expensive and we plan to work to make  
9 sure the prices come down. We also want to make  
10 sure that visas to go to Cuba by Cuban-Americans  
11 are granted expeditiously and fairly. And we want  
12 to make sure that the same happens for Cubans  
13 traveling to the United States.

14 Q If one wanted to become a member of  
15 this particular organization, what would one have  
16 to do?

17 A Find out that it exists. Make sure  
18 that you agree with the mission statement and the  
19 work and then just send any kind of contribution.  
20 We don't have a set fee.

21 Q So there isn't a membership fee,  
22 it's just --

23 A No.

24 Q Just --

25 A Contributions.

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1 Q So it's fair to say then that this  
2 organization is founded strictly on contributions?

3 A Contributions.

4 Q These contributions, is there a list  
5 of the contributors?

6 A I'm sure we have a list of  
7 contributors, yes.

8 Q And that list will show the name or  
9 the company and the amount contributed?

10 A Um-hmm.

11 Q Yes?

12 A Yes.

13 Q Is there a maximum contribution  
14 limit?

15 A Not that I'm aware of.

16 Q Are you paid from this organization?  
17 Do you draw a salary?

18 A No, I don't draw a salary.

19 Q Are any of the officers that you  
20 mentioned, do they draw salaries?

21 A No, they don't draw a salary.

22 Q What is the hierarchy of this group?  
23 You are executive director; is anybody above you?  
24 A We have a president.  
25 Q Who is the president of this

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1 particular group?  
2 A Alvaro Fernandez.  
3 Q Tell me what your functions as  
4 executive director are for the Cuban-American  
5 Commission for Family Rights.  
6 A Keep the member list accurate.  
7 Devise strategies both in Washington and Miami to  
8 have our organization known and active. Find  
9 issues that we can absolutely support that has to  
10 do with family rights.  
11 Q How do you go about doing your duty  
12 as executive director? Do you travel to  
13 Washington on a semi regular basis to meet with  
14 people in Washington? Tell me what your  
15 day-to-day is like as executive director.  
16 A Well, it changes. I don't have a  
17 day-to-day specific duty. It changes according to  
18 where we are with the mission and what is  
19 happening both in Washington and Miami. I don't

20 have a day-to-day.

21 Q How often have you traveled to  
22 Washington since 2004 with regards to the  
23 Cuban-American Commission for Family Rights?

24 A Oh, probably a dozen times.

25 Q What do you do when you have these

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1 visits to Washington, dozen or so times you have  
2 gone since June of 2004?

3 A Well, a lot of times we meet with  
4 members of Congress so they are aware of the  
5 travel restrictions. We meet with our NGO's that  
6 are also working to eliminate these travel  
7 restrictions.

8 Q You said NGO. What does that mean?

9 A Non-governmental organizations in  
10 Washington.

11 Q What are the other non-governmental  
12 organizations you have met with since June of 2004  
13 on your trips to Washington, D.C.?

14 A Okay. The Washington Office on  
15 Latin America, the Latin America Working Group,  
16 the New America Foundation, Center for Democracy  
17 in the Americas, Center for International Policy,



18 the Lexington Institute. That's basically the  
19 core. There are others. The Council of Foreign  
20 Relations. That's basically the core.

21 Q Members of Congress that you met  
22 with since June of 2004?

23 A Oh, my goodness.

24 Q Before you start, approximately how  
25 many?

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1 A Approximately how many? Probably  
2 two dozen members of Congress maybe, maybe.

3 Q Tell me some of those you met with.

4 A Oh, my goodness. Let's see. I have  
5 met with Senator Dodd. I have met with  
6 Representative Delahunt, Representative Flake,  
7 Representative McGovern, Representative Ileana  
8 Ros-Lehtinen, Representative Engel, Representative  
9 Berman. I have been to the offices of Senator  
10 Spector, Senator Baucus, Senator Dorgan, Senator  
11 Enzi. I can go on and on and on. The list is  
12 long.

13 Q And when meeting with these various  
14 members of Congress, the tone of the meeting is  
15 basically to educate them as to how cruel, about

16 what you had said earlier the mission statement of  
17 the group was?

18 A When I have met with these members  
19 of Congress, it's basically to advocate for a  
20 revocation of these measures.

21 Q What is the consensus or the general  
22 opinion of these members of Congress? I'm not  
23 going to ask you individually what each of them  
24 said, but generally, do they agree or disagree?

25 A Overwhelmingly agreed.

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1 Q So the majority of them  
2 overwhelmingly agreed?

3 A That they needed to be revoked, yes,  
4 I would say so.

5 Q Did Ros Lehtinen also agree?

6 A Ros Lehtinen agreed that they were  
7 difficult regulations. She did not agree that she  
8 would support a change of status, of the status  
9 quo.

10 Q Ever meet with Diaz-Balart?

11 A They have never allowed us in their  
12 office.

13 Q Do you know why?

14 A You will have to ask them.

15 Q Did they give you any reasons why  
16 they didn't let you in the office?

17 A They are busy.

18 Q The list of donors that, with  
19 regards to this particular group, the  
20 Cuban-American Commission for Family Rights, do  
21 you have that list of donors? Do you keep that  
22 list yourself or does someone else keep that list?

23 A I keep a bank account and shows all  
24 the different donations to the organization.

25 Q The bank account will show the

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1 amount donated and the fact that it was deposited,  
2 but the actual list of who made the donation, who  
3 keeps that list?

4 A I keep that list.

5 Q So if I was then to request from  
6 Silvia Wilhelm the list of those donors, you would  
7 be able to produce that, correct?

8 A Yes, I would.

9 MR. ROGOW: Whoa, whoa. Under NAACP  
10 v. Gibson I think it's privileged in terms  
11 of the membership list.

12 MR. DORTA: But you would have that  
13 list if I was to request it?

14 You would object to it.

15 MR. ROGOW: She has a list. We  
16 would assert a privilege with regard  
17 to the list.

18 BY MR. DORTA:

19 Q Have you ever traveled to Cuba  
20 through the Cuban-American Commission for Family  
21 Rights?

22 A No.

23 Q Say I wanted to start a group, I  
24 wanted to start a group with a similar agenda.

25 A Um-hmm.

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1 Q How do you go about obtaining the  
2 information? How would I go about doing that?  
3 How did you do it?

4 A We had a core group of members of  
5 the community that felt very strongly against the  
6 regulations. We met for a period of time to find  
7 out the best way to deal with these regulations  
8 and we decided to create an organization.

9 Q So then you go to get a lawyer or

10 you sign up on the website there and you create an  
11 organization, a not-for-profit organization?

12 A I went to a lawyer and he created a  
13 not-for-profit organization.

14 Q How do you go about getting an  
15 audience with all these various Congressmen?

16 A I have been going to Washington  
17 since 1997 on an ongoing basis and I have -- I  
18 know a lot of members of Congress and the NGO's  
19 that I mentioned before are in Washington and they  
20 are -- part of what some of them do is make sure  
21 that you get an audience in front of a member of  
22 Congress.

23 Q So you originally -- let me go back  
24 to '97. I'm going to ask you specific questions  
25 with regards to what organization you were with

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1 then, but when you started gathering or having  
2 these meetings with these various representatives  
3 of Congress, you did it through the NGO's, the  
4 NGO's set it up or did you do it through your own?

5 A It could be either way.

6 Q Okay.

7 A Either way.

8 Q But now because you have developed a  
9 relationship with them throughout the years,  
10 I guess it's easier for Silvia Wilhelm to get an  
11 audience with them than, say, Joe Blow from the  
12 streets?

13 A Absolutely.

14 Q Other than the Cuban-American  
15 Commission for Family Rights, currently, at the  
16 same time, you indicated you were also part of  
17 Puentes Cubanos?

18 A Um-hmm.

19 Q Yes?

20 A Um-hmm.

21 Q Yes?

22 A Yes. Sorry.

23 Q No problem. How long have you been  
24 part of Puentes Cubanos?

25 A Since it was founded in 1999.

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1 Q How was Puentes Cubanos founded in  
2 1999, tell me that.

3 A Group of persons that -- mainly  
4 Cuban-Americans that felt strongly during the  
5 Clinton administration that people to people work

6 was an important work we could do in Cuba.

7 Q And who are the officers of Puentes  
8 Cubanos?

9 A The officers of Puentes Cubanos are  
10 Dr. Max Castro, Attorney David Cibrian from San  
11 Antonio, Texas, Luis Mosquera, my husband and  
12 myself right now.

13 Q Other than yourself, are there any  
14 officers that are both officers in Puentes Cubanos  
15 as well as the Cuban-American Commission for  
16 Family Rights?

17 A No.

18 Q What is Puentes Cubanos' mission  
19 statement?

20 A The mission statement of Puentes  
21 Cubanos was to foster knowledge, understanding and  
22 reconciliation between the people of the United  
23 States and Cuba.

24 Q What is your position at Puentes  
25 Cubanos?

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1 A Executive director.

2 Q How long have you had that position?

3 A Since 1999.

4 Q Other than you, has anyone else been  
5 executive director of Puentes Cubanos?

6 A No.

7 Q This is also a not-for-profit  
8 organization?

9 A Yes.

10 Q Also incorporated in 1999?

11 A Incorporated in 1999.

12 Q Incorporated in Florida?

13 A Incorporated in Florida.

14 Q How does this group obtain funding?

15 A Foundation money.

16 Q Can you explain that for me?

17 A I couldn't hear you.

18 Q What do you mean by that?

19 A Foundations that give money to  
20 different 501C3's.

21 Q Give money --

22 A Give money to not-for-profits  
23 because they agree with the mission statement of  
24 the organization.

25 Q So you also get from individual

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1 donors?



2 A We also get from individual donors.

3 Q Now, the foundations that give money  
4 with regards to Puentes Cubanos, how many  
5 foundations are there? Is there one, more than  
6 one?

7 A More than one.

8 Q More than ten?

9 A No.

10 Q More than five?

11 A No.

12 Q More than three?

13 A Yes.

14 Q More than three, less than five?

15 A More than three and less than five.

16 Q Is Puentes Cubanos a lobbying group?

17 A No, sir.

18 Q Does Puentes Cubanos -- do you draw  
19 a salary from Puentes Cubanos?

20 A I draw a salary from Puentes  
21 Cubanos.

22 Q Who determines the amount of salary?

23 A The Board.

24 Q The Board of Puentes Cubanos?

25 A The Board of Puentes Cubanos.

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1 Q And the Board of Puentes Cubanos  
2 consists of the individuals you indicated were  
3 officers?

4 A Right.

5 Q Is there anyone else as part of that  
6 Board other than the officers of the corporation,  
7 or the not-for-profit organization?

8 A No.

9 Q Are you part of the Board?

10 A I am part of the Board.

11 Q What is the salary you draw from  
12 Puentes Cubanos?

13 A \$2000 a month.

14 Q You get paid monthly, weekly?

15 A Monthly.

16 Q Do you have any other source of  
17 income other than Puentes Cubanos?

18 A No.

19 Q Currently, at this time, are you  
20 drawing any salary from Puentes Cubanos?

21 A That was my last month.

22 Q Does Puentes Cubanos have a bank  
23 account?

24 A Yes.

25 Q Is that also in Coconut Grove Bank?

1       A    Yes.

2       Q    I didn't ask you, but the  
3 Cuban-American Commission for Family Rights, do  
4 they also have a bank account at the Coconut Grove  
5 Bank?

6       A    Yes.

7       Q    Is there an accountant that you  
8 employ to do the taxes or what have you? Not the  
9 taxes, to do the bookkeeping for the company?

10      A    Yes.

11      Q    For Puentes Cubanos?

12      A    Yes.

13      Q    Who is the accountant?

14      A    Beverly Orr, O-r-r.

15      Q    Does Ms. Orr also do the  
16 Cuban-American Commission for Family Rights?

17      A    No.

18      Q    Who does the Cuban-American  
19 Commission for Family Rights?

20      A    Manuel Garcia.

21      Q    Any other banking institutions do  
22 the banking for Puentes Cubanos other than the  
23 Coconut Grove Bank?

24      A    No.

25 Q Can you tell me the hierarchy of

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1 this group? You are executive director. Is there

2 anybody above you?

3 A No.

4 Q Is there anybody below you?

5 A No.

6 Q You say there was a Board. Is there

7 a CEO, CFO?

8 A Yes, there is a -- there really

9 isn't a CEO.

10 Q Okay.

11 A There is a CFO.

12 Q Who is the CFO?

13 A My husband.

14 Q Do you keep a list of donors for

15 Puentes Cubanos as well?

16 A Yes, I do.

17 Q Do you keep a list as to the

18 foundations and what the foundations are donating?

19 A Absolutely.

20 Q You travel to Cuba as part of this

21 group?

22 A Yes, I have.

23 Q How many occasions?

24 A We got a license in 1999 to travel

25 to Cuba and that license expired in 2003 or four,

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1 I don't remember now, and I traveled multiple  
2 times.

3 Q How many times, approximately?

4 A Between '99 and 2004, my goodness.

5 Two dozen times.

6 Q Two dozen?

7 A Yeah, yeah. I think I listed them  
8 in my -- my list.

9 Q First time you went back to Cuba,  
10 according to your list, was in 1994 to visit  
11 family?

12 A May, 1994.

13 Q That was the first time you went  
14 back since you left with Pedro Pan?

15 A Exactly.

16 Q And the reason for that visit was  
17 for family visit?

18 A Family visit.

19 Q Going to then, you indicated that  
20 you opened Puentes in '99, you got your license in

21 '99. Yet in '99, according to your  
22 Interrogatories, you went back there for a family  
23 visit.

24 A I went back to Cuba in '96 for a  
25 family visit.

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1 Q Okay.

2 A With my husband. Because we could,  
3 as a Cuban-American, travel to Cuba once a year  
4 to see family, and I did that.

5 Q You did that in '96, '97, '98 and  
6 '99?

7 A In '99 I went family and also went  
8 for Puentes Cubanos.

9 Q According to your Interrogatories,  
10 you just put family and that may just have been an  
11 oversight, but let me ask you a question with  
12 regards to Puentes Cubanos and your '99 visit.

13 A Um-hmm.

14 Q What was the purpose of your visit  
15 in '99 through Puentes Cubanos?

16 A I had a few projects that I needed  
17 to make sure that I had a counterpart on the other  
18 end and it was more than likely that, for that

19 reason that I went.

20 Q Let me stop you there and back up.

21 When you started Puentes Cubanos in '99 -- I'm

22 sorry, '97?

23 A '99.

24 Q You started Puentes Cubanos and you

25 got your license in '99. Who did you get your

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1 license through, was that through OFAC?

2 A OFAC.

3 Q And you have your license then to

4 travel to Cuba. How then do you from here reach

5 out to Cuba to know whom in Cuba to speak to with

6 regards to your agenda?

7 A First of all, you have to deal with

8 the Cuba Interest Section in Washington, D.C.

9 Q So then the first step for you to be

10 able to do your travels to Cuba effectively was to

11 speak through the Cuban Interest Section as to

12 what was the purpose of your visit?

13 A Correct.

14 Q Whom did you speak to back in '99

15 with the Cuban Interest Section in Washington,

16 D.C.?

17 A One of the consuls.  
18 Q Do you remember the name?  
19 A Probably Collazo, who was the first  
20 consul at the time.  
21 Q How would you spell that?  
22 A C-o-l-l-a-z-o, Armando Collazo, I  
23 believe was his name.  
24 Q And when you speak to Armando  
25 Collazo, what do you tell him?

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1 A That I am interested in Project X.  
2 Q Whatever it is, the project that you  
3 have?  
4 A Exactly.  
5 Q So in '99 it would have been that  
6 you were going to go visit for what purpose?  
7 A We had two projects that we were  
8 trying to develop in 1999. One was the  
9 professional, the young Cuban-American  
10 professionals. Another one was the Foundation for  
11 Women's Health of the United States.  
12 Q Tell me about the Cuban-American  
13 Professionals, that project; what was that project  
14 about?



15       A    That project was about putting  
16 together young Cuban-American professionals with  
17 their counterparts in Cuba centered around the  
18 issue of Cuban identity; what it was to be Cuban  
19 from two completely different perspectives.

20       Q    And purpose of this project would  
21 have been then for the Cuban-American to realize  
22 what the Cuban was doing in Cuba and vice versa?

23       A    Yes.

24       Q    Okay.

25       A    Yes.

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1       Q    Was there any other purpose for that  
2 project other than what you just described?

3       A    No other purpose.

4       Q    And then the second one was the  
5 Foundation for Women's Health in the United  
6 States. Can you tell me about that project?

7       A    Yes. This was a group of American  
8 physicians who were advocating for a new specialty  
9 called women's health and they wanted to go to  
10 Cuba to see what Cuba was doing in the health care  
11 industry, specifically geared to the betterment of  
12 the health of Cuban women.

13 Q Okay. So you go then to the Cuban  
14 Interest Section and you present these two  
15 projects. Do you have to present documentation to  
16 them as to what this project is with some kind of  
17 a brief history as to what you want or what the  
18 purpose is? Or tell me how you go about doing  
19 that.

20 A Well, you first talk, talk it over,  
21 and eventually they will require like a one page,  
22 you know, what is the project all about, under  
23 what umbrella is this project coming, who is  
24 funding the project, what is the expected travel  
25 date, length of travel and what is the mission of

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1 the project.

2 Q And that is put down in writing?

3 A Most times it is.

4 Q Given to the Cuban Interest Section?

5 A To the Cuban Interest Section.

6 Q Is there a corresponding document  
7 that is also filed with OFAC or anyone in the  
8 United States Government?

9 A The only document that OFAC really  
10 has is the license application that basically

11 tells you what is our interest, what are we going  
12 to be doing in Cuba. And this fell into the  
13 people to people category of President Clinton.

14 Q It was under the umbrella of the  
15 license that you --

16 A It met all the license requirements  
17 under people to people.

18 Q But my question --

19 A Cultural --

20 Q I'm sorry, didn't mean to cut you  
21 off.

22 A Cultural, professional, educational  
23 exchanges. It fell under the umbrella.

24 Q Okay. Other than the document that  
25 you filed with the Cuban Interest Section in '99,

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1 presumably for these two projects, did you have to  
2 file any corresponding document with any other  
3 agency of the U.S. Government?

4 A No.

5 Q In other words, show them, I filed  
6 this?

7 A No.

8 Q As part of your records, do you keep

9 those documents that you filed with the Cuban  
10 Interest Section for the trips and various  
11 projects that you have gone to Cuba through  
12 Puentes Cubanos?

13 A More than likely I will have some of  
14 those documents.

15 Q Do you have them in a particular  
16 file or just relating to the project that you went  
17 on?

18 A Related to the project.

19 Q And we know that the first two  
20 projects would have been in the '99 trip?

21 A Yes, but they didn't really start  
22 until 2000.

23 Q Okay. But you did go Cuba, the  
24 family visit in '99, according to your  
25 Interrogatories.

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1 A Yes.

2 Q Do you do anything with regards to  
3 these two projects that you mentioned in the '99  
4 trip?

5 A I don't recall.

6 Q Okay. And I may have asked you

7 this, I apologize. In the '99 trip, did  
8 Dr. Wilhelm accompany you in the '99 trip?

9 A Probably not.

10 Q When you go to Cuba as part of  
11 Puentes Cubanos, specifically when you began in  
12 this 2000 with the Cuban-American professionals,  
13 who else from the group accompanies you on these  
14 trips?

15 A Well, I go by myself. The only time  
16 I'm accompanied is when I'm taking the actual  
17 group with me.

18 Q So usually you go by yourself, but  
19 the Board members and those individuals that are  
20 part of Puentes Cubanos don't accompany you or go  
21 with you to Cuba?

22 A Not necessarily, no.

23 Q Have you ever gone as a group to  
24 Puentes Cubanos and the Board has actually  
25 traveled to Cuba with you?

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1 A No.

2 (Thereupon, a short recess was  
3 taken, after which the following  
4 proceedings were had:)

5 BY MR. DORTA:

6 Q After you speak to the Cuban  
7 Interest Section prior to this first trip through  
8 Puentes Cubanos, do you have to take any other  
9 steps with regards to planning this trip through  
10 either the U.S. Government or the Cuban  
11 Government?

12 A Well, you have to figure out who  
13 your counterpart is going to be.

14 Q How do you do that?

15 A To tell you the truth, it's a  
16 combination of, at first it's basically the Cuban  
17 Government saying, well, this can be done through  
18 the University of Havana, this can be done through  
19 the Ministry of Public Health. They have to give  
20 you the guideline as to where this fits under.

21 Q And this is communicated through the  
22 Cuban Interest Section through Mr. Collazo or the  
23 gentleman you indicated?

24 A Someone else.

25 Q Someone else within the Cuban

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1 Interest Section in Washington?

2 A They have to approve the project or

3 you don't get on the ground in Cuba.

4 Q So once the project is approved,

5 they find a counterpart for you and they

6 pigeonhole you as to where it is you need to go?

7 A You can deal that way.

8 Q Would you describe it any other way,

9 where they basically tell you where you need to go

10 and who your counterpart --

11 A They give you the guidelines as to

12 who you need to work with as your counterpart.

13 Q So you then contact the counterpart

14 and start engaging in dialogue from here before

15 arriving in Cuba?

16 A Oh, absolutely.

17 Q And do you do that by email, do you

18 do that by phone, do you do that by

19 correspondence?

20 A No, not correspondence. Either

21 email or phone.

22 Q And the email accounts you would use

23 would be the ones that we discussed that you told

24 me you had earlier?

25 A Yes.

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1 Q No other email accounts?

2 A I cannot think of another email

3 account, no.

4 Q Then what happens? Then after

5 you've found your counterpart, what is the next

6 step?

7 A Well, you have to plan the program

8 itself, what it's going to consist of.

9 Q Explain to me what that means.

10 A You have to find exactly what

11 you are going to provide the people that you are

12 going to take, like what are they going to visit.

13 If it's a question of meeting at the university,

14 how many hours a day, who is going to carry the

15 discussion. You have to do the logistics of the

16 project.

17 Q Let me stop you there, let me back

18 up to the specific project, so you tell me exactly

19 what you did with regards to this one. You are

20 planning the Women's Health Exchange Program that,

21 according to your Interrogatories, occurred

22 January 16 to the 23rd in the year 2000; what did

23 you do specifically with regards to planning that

24 trip and that project?

25 A Okay. I went to the head of the



1 Cuban Interest Section, whose name was Fernando  
2 Ramirez de Estenoz, who happens to also be a  
3 physician. I explained the desire to do this  
4 project in the health care field and he basically  
5 gave me the suggestions of who to contact within  
6 the Ministry of Health.

7 Q This is after your program was  
8 approved?

9 A While it is being approved.

10 Q In the process, how long did it take  
11 for that particular program to be approved from  
12 the moment you submitted it to the Cuban Interest  
13 Section to the time that they said okay?

14 A Oh, I don't recall. I don't recall.

15 Q Normally how long does it take?

16 A Well, I have had projects that have  
17 taken three to six months. I have had  
18 projects that have taken three years and at the  
19 end of three years have been denied. So it  
20 depends on the project.

21 Q So that particular project, then he  
22 gives you the names of those individuals while the  
23 project is still pending approval. What, if  
24 anything, did you do with regards to the  
25 information he gave you with that particular

1 project?

2 A Well, I discussed this with the  
3 Foundation for Women's Health.

4 Q Okay.

5 A With the Board to make sure that it  
6 met their approval. And they enthusiastically  
7 supported going forward.

8 Q Then what happened?

9 A We got some funding for the trip.

10 Q How did you do that?

11 A By informing the foundation that I  
12 work with about the project, about the mission of  
13 the project, about the participants in the  
14 project, and they enthusiastically supported the  
15 project.

16 Q Other than your salary from Puentes  
17 Cubanos from 1999 to the present, have you ever  
18 received any other funds or any other form of  
19 income, you personally, from 1999 to the present?

20 A I have been asked to escort some  
21 trips, some humanitarian trips, and I have been  
22 paid as an escort or consultant, whatever you want  
23 to call it.

24 Q How many times has that happened  
25 since '99 to the present?

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1 A Maybe five or six times.

2 Q What are you paid?

3 A A per diem. Of course, you know, I  
4 don't pay for the trip, I go free and a per diem.

5 Q What is the per diem per day?

6 A Well, it depends on the group. It  
7 could be anywhere between \$200, \$300 a day to  
8 whatever.

9 Q What is the most you have been paid  
10 as an escort per day?

11 This sounds so bad. I'm going to  
12 rephrase it so when I'm reading it I don't laugh  
13 out loud.

14 MR. ROGOW: We understand.

15 MR. DORTA: I know you understand.  
16 If anyone else is reading it, I want them  
17 to understand.

18 BY MR. DORTA:

19 Q As a consultant/escort, what is the  
20 most you have been paid per day?

21 A Well, per day -- let's say per trip,

22 maybe \$1000, \$2000.

23 Q That's for the trip?

24 A For the trip, for taking the trip.

25 The trip could be anywhere between five to seven

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1 days.

2 Q Other than as a consultant/escort

3 and your salary from Puentes Cubanos from 1999,

4 you have no other sources of income, correct?

5 A I have no other sources of income.

6 Q Foundations, when they approve a

7 project, they don't give you money aside from your

8 participation in the project?

9 A They give money towards the

10 organization; it goes into the bank account and I

11 continue to draw my same \$2000 a month.

12 Q When you get the funding from the

13 foundation, what then happens; specifically in

14 this Women's Health Exchange project, what did you

15 do then? You had the money from the foundation,

16 you had the okay from the Cuban Government, you

17 had the program already approved. What happens

18 then?

19 A Well, the foundation decided who all

20 from the Board was going to travel and we made the  
21 arrangements, had the itinerary and off we went to  
22 Cuba.

23 Q When you get to Cuba, with regards  
24 to the itinerary, does anyone from Puentes decide  
25 who is going to be joining you on the trip or is

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1 that strictly the foundation who is doing the  
2 funding?

3 A The foundation does not decide who  
4 goes on the trip.

5 Q Maybe I misunderstood what you said.

6 A Puentes decides who goes on the trip  
7 from the Puentes side. The Women's Foundation for  
8 Women's Health decides which doctors go on the  
9 trip.

10 Q Which doctors are going to be going?

11 A Exactly.

12 Q And then you get to Cuba and you go  
13 through the program that they have approved?

14 A Exactly.

15 Q When you went to Cuba in 2000 for  
16 the Women's Health Exchange Program, where did you  
17 stay?

18       A    We stayed at the Hotel Florida in  
19   Old Havana.

20       Q    Do you always stay in the same  
21   hotel?

22       A    No, I don't.

23       Q    When you went with regards to the  
24   Young Professional Exchange in May 2 to 6 of 2000,  
25   whom in the Cuba Interest Section did you speak to

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1   to obtain permission for that particular trip?

2       A    Okay. That particular trip came  
3   about, that particular exchange came about as the  
4   result of an idea that -- let me backtrack.

5       Q    Sure.

6       A    That particular program started  
7   being created in 1998 when I was the executive  
8   director of the Cuban Committee for Democracy  
9   before Puentes Cubanos was created. It was the  
10   idea of my assistant, who was a young Puerto Rican  
11   who had traveled to Cuba, done her Masters thesis  
12   there and thought that it would be a very good  
13   idea to have an encounter of young Cuban  
14   professionals with their counterparts in Cuba  
15   around the issue of identity.

16 Q When you say professionals, what  
17 kind of Cuban professionals were you aiming at?

18 A I have taken lawyers.

19 Q For that particular trip in May of  
20 2000 --

21 A I have taken different professionals  
22 on different trips. I would have to go back to my  
23 notes to figure out on what trip.

24 Q Understood. Just generally, with  
25 that particular trip, do you remember what

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1 professionals you were aiming at; you were looking  
2 for lawyers, doctors, what have you?

3 A No, we were more aiming for the  
4 person, for the person and then the professional.  
5 It was more the person and not necessarily, "I  
6 need a lawyer," or, "I need an artist."

7 We were looking for people that we  
8 knew or that people could recommend.

9 Q Okay. And then what happened?

10 A And then?

11 Q Tell me what you -- the steps you  
12 took to basically get to go on this trip.

13 A My assistant went through the same

14 process. She talked to the Cuban Interest Section  
15 to present the project and it took several months  
16 basically for them to come back and say, this is  
17 something that we would be interested in having.

18 Q What is her name?

19 A Her name is Hannah Ellinson. She is  
20 married now, I don't know if she carries her same  
21 last name or not.

22 Q Just briefly, out of order, what  
23 medical school did Dr. Wilhelm go to?

24 A He is a Gator.

25 Q So it would be University of

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1 Florida?

2 A Absolutely.

3 Q So then it wasn't you that did the  
4 application through the Cuban Interest Section for  
5 the Young Professional Exchange May 2nd through  
6 May 6, is that right, Hannah that did?

7 A The first person that talked to the  
8 Cuban Interest Section about that particular  
9 project was Hannah and I absolutely gave her free  
10 reign because it was a young professional's  
11 project and she was of that generation. I'm much



12 older, I'm of another generation.

13 Q So you eventually ended up going to  
14 the Cuban Interest Section with regards to that  
15 particular project in 2000, even though she had  
16 gone and presented it to them first. Did you have  
17 to go back?

18 A No, I did not.

19 Q So they basically approved it?

20 A They approved the project and she  
21 took the first trip. I did not go on the first  
22 trip.

23 Q And that would have been prior to  
24 '99?

25 A I think it was in '99 that she took

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1 the first trip. I did not accompany her on that  
2 trip. It was her project.

3 Q She didn't do it through Puentes?

4 A We did not have a license yet, so  
5 she did it through the Center for International  
6 Policy of Washington, D.C.

7 Q May 2nd to May 6th of 2000 when you  
8 went to the Young Professional Exchange --

9 A Could you repeat that, the date?

10 Q Sure. May 2nd to May 6th of 2000.

11 A Okay.

12 Q According to your Interrogatories,  
13 you said you went with the Young Professional  
14 Exchange to Cuba. When you went to that  
15 particular program, where did you stay?

16 A At the Hotel Victoria. Wait, wait,  
17 wait, because I have been several times with this  
18 group. I believe the Hotel Victoria but I'm not  
19 100 percent sure.

20 Q Fair enough. Did you have to do the  
21 same steps as you did with the Women's Health  
22 Exchange program: Going to the foundation to  
23 obtain the funding to get the program? Is that  
24 normal, the course for all --

25 A It is normal. You go to the

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1 foundation, you put in a proposal. Obviously  
2 there is a deadline for proposals. You state what  
3 you have, what the mission of the proposal is, you  
4 give them a budget and they either approve it at  
5 the Board of Directors or they reject it at the  
6 Board of Directors.

7 Q What is the average budget for this

8 particular trip?

9 A Less than \$10,000.

10 Q Who prepares this paperwork to  
11 submit to the foundation?

12 A I prepare the paperwork.

13 Q So Silvia Wilhelm personally goes  
14 ahead and prepares it?

15 A Silvia Wilhelm prepares the  
16 proposals.

17 Q You do that in writing, you submit  
18 that to the foundation?

19 A Yes.

20 Q How do you evaluate or determine  
21 what the budget is?

22 A Well, I know what the airline  
23 tickets is, cost. I know what the hotel stay is,  
24 I know what transportation is. I mean, I have a  
25 fair -- I'm very well versed on what the cost of a

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1 trip is.

2 Q You had started going to Cuba in  
3 '94. You began going through Puentes in '99, you  
4 began getting this knowledge because of your  
5 travels in '94 or was there something else that

6 helped you know what the --

7 A I think being on the ground taught  
8 me.

9 Q So being there, in other words,  
10 having gone in the past for your family visits is  
11 what gave you the experience to be able to give an  
12 idea as to how much it would be?

13 A Absolutely.

14 Q How do you know how many people to  
15 do the budget for?

16 A How did I know what?

17 Q When you say a budget, tell me how  
18 that goes, what is it you are considering, how  
19 many individuals?

20 A Well, based on whether it's six  
21 individuals and how much is the airline tickets  
22 and how much is the lodging and how much are the  
23 meals and how much is the transportation. And I  
24 have a good idea how to estimate and that's what I  
25 send to the foundations. And based on the mission

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1 of the project and based on the dollar amount,  
2 they either decide whether it's worth their  
3 investment.

4 Q Okay. You went back to Cuba a third  
5 time in 2000, according to your Interrogatories,  
6 October 13 through October 29. Can you tell me  
7 about that program?

8 A Was it with the Young  
9 Professionals --

10 Q No, I'm sorry, International --

11 A What question is this?

12 Q Women's Health.

13 A Excuse me, which one are you talking  
14 about?

15 Q International Symposium on Women's  
16 Health.

17 A What date?

18 Q October 13 to October 29.

19 A Okay, fine. Now I know what you are  
20 talking about. What was the question?

21 Q Tell me about that program.

22 A Cuba was hosting in the City of  
23 Santiago an International Symposium on Women's  
24 Health. Because I had already taken the Board of  
25 the women's foundations -- the Foundation for

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2 they were very interested in doing people to  
3 people work in the health field in Cuba, we were  
4 invited by the organizers of the Congress to bring  
5 an American delegation.

6 Q How does that work? How do you get  
7 invited?

8 A Well, the people -- the people in  
9 Cuba that are from the medical field already had  
10 met some of these physicians when they had come to  
11 Cuba. They were highly impressed with them and  
12 they thought that they would be an asset to the  
13 conference. And as such I took the largest  
14 delegation to that Congress. I think we were like  
15 thirty-nine American physicians. My husband went  
16 with me and we were in Santiago.

17 Q Going back to the Women's Health  
18 Exchange Program, the first time you went, the  
19 individuals that the foundation sent and those  
20 that traveled from Puentes, were they all Spanish  
21 speaking?

22 A There was one Cuban-American --  
23 well, actually one like you, an American of Cuban  
24 descent. You were born here, right?

25 Q Um-hmm.

1           A    An American of Cuban descent, who  
2   was studying at Harvard at the time, public  
3   health. And the others were Americans. One lived  
4   in Albuquerque, New Mexico and knew Spanish quite  
5   fluently.

6           Q    So then the individuals that were  
7   not Spanish speakers, were fluent in Spanish, in  
8   other words, those that weren't of Hispanic  
9   ancestry that went on this particular trip --

10          A    No, they were not fluent in Spanish.

11          Q    They were not?

12          A    No. One from Albuquerque was fluent  
13   in Spanish, Dr. Justina Trot, and the daughter of  
14   Cuban-Americans, was fluent in Spanish. The  
15   owners were not.

16          Q    When they are not fluent in Spanish,  
17   did they do it through an interpreter?

18          A    I'm fluent in both languages.

19          Q    So you would serve as the  
20   interpreter?

21          A    Most of the time. If not, the  
22   counterpart was very fluent in English in Cuba, so  
23   they would communicate basically in English.

24          Q    So when the International Symposium  
25   of Women's Health happens in October, you get

1 invited back. Is this then the physicians in Cuba  
2 contact the physicians in the United States and  
3 say, "Why don't you all come back," or you do it  
4 through the Cuban Interest Section? Tell me how  
5 they go about getting this invitation.

6 A They basically let the foundation  
7 know that this Congress is happening and the  
8 foundation, these women, were very motivated to go  
9 back to Cuba and present their findings on women's  
10 health. And all we had to do was find the funding  
11 to go and go. I don't have to go to the Cuban  
12 Interest Section to say we are doing this.

13 Q Do you have to go to any agency in  
14 the U.S. Government to say we are doing this?

15 A No, we didn't.

16 Q You traveled --

17 A We had a license.

18 Q You continued traveling under the  
19 same OFAC license?

20 A Yes, sir.

21 Q Where did you stay when you went to  
22 Santiago in October?

23 A At the Melia Santiago.

24 Q You went back in January of 2001 to



25 visit family?

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1 A And by the way --

2 Q Yes, ma'am?

3 A I combined that trip with a family  
4 visit.

5 Q Okay. So the October 13 through 29  
6 of 2000 trip was both business and family?

7 A It was to go to the Congress for  
8 certain number of days that the license allows you  
9 to, no more than seven days, and then I went  
10 to see my family in Biombo and went to see my  
11 father's grave, which I had never seen.

12 Q So maybe you can tell me a little  
13 bit there and educate me with regards to the  
14 license. The license only allows you to travel  
15 seven days and then after that seven days passed,  
16 then you on your own can also stay there outside  
17 from the license going on to visit family?

18 A Absolutely.

19 Q So then for that particular trip,  
20 how long were you there for?

21 A We were there probably ten days,  
22 twelve days, my husband and I.

23 Q So aside from the seven days, you  
24 were able to stay extra days?

25 A (Witness nods head in the

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1 affirmative).

2 Q Yes?

3 A Yes.

4 Q Is there anything that you need to  
5 do to be able to be clear as to the fact that you  
6 are not violating the terms of the license that  
7 was given to you by OFAC? Did you write a letter,  
8 write a note, let someone know, hey, I'm going for  
9 business but I'm also going to go for family  
10 visit?

11 A Sir, I have my ethics and I don't  
12 violate any travel regulations. I don't have to  
13 advise the U.S. Government every time -- I mean,  
14 they know I either have a license or I go for  
15 family reasons. I mark on my travel application  
16 the reasons for my going, the length of stay.

17 Q So then your travel application is  
18 going to reflect the fact --

19 A Absolutely, both.

20 Q -- that you are going to --

21 A Absolutely, both.

22 Q After your October visit, you said  
23 you went back in January of 2001 to visit family  
24 as well?

25 A Yes.

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1 Q Can you tell me about that trip?

2 A As a result of my going back to Cuba  
3 in 1994, I found that my first cousin, who had  
4 been in jail, needed to get out of the island.  
5 And both my husband and I got her, her husband and  
6 her youngest child out of the island. She left  
7 behind two kids in Cuba and they became literally  
8 my kids in Cuba, so I had to also take care of  
9 them. They were young and they were left behind.

10 Q How young?

11 A How young? They must have been --  
12 well, if they are thirty-six now, they must have  
13 been -- you can start, you can figure out -- what  
14 year was that?

15 Q So when they were left by their  
16 family, how old were they, approximately?

17 A In their twenties, early twenties.

18 Q So then you went back in January of

19 2001 to take care of them?

20 A I always visited them and I always

21 took care of them when I went to Cuba.

22 Q What are their names?

23 A Rafael Guerra de Teurbe Tolon and at

24 the time his brother, Luis Rene Guerra de Teurbe

25 Tolon was also there with his family. He now

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1 lives in Miami.

2 Q So Luis came to the United States?

3 A Yes. Two of the three children now

4 live in the United States.

5 Q Is there a reason why the third one

6 is still in Cuba?

7 A Because he hasn't had an opportunity

8 to leave or he would be here right now with us.

9 Q You said he was incarcerated. What

10 was the reason for his incarceration?

11 A My cousin was incarcerated, his

12 mother, for dealing in dollars when dollars were

13 not allowed in Cuba.

14 Q How long was she incarcerated for?

15 A Just a few days, maybe two or three

16 days.

17 Q Did you do anything else with  
18 regards to your family visit in January of 2000?

19 A I mean, support my family, be with  
20 my family.

21 Q When you say support, what do you  
22 mean by that?

23 A Buy food for my family, take  
24 clothing to my family.

25 Q Did anyone accompany you on that

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1 trip in January of 2001?

2 A Of 2000 what?

3 Q 2001.

4 A Probably not.

5 Q According to the Responses to your  
6 Interrogatories, you indicated that in March of  
7 2001 you returned to Cuba through Puentes, I'm  
8 assuming, setting arrangements for women's  
9 project, Entre Nosotras.

10 A Yes.

11 Q Can you tell me about that?

12 A I would be delighted to tell you  
13 about that program.

14 I presented a proposal to the Cuban

15 Interest Section for a people to people project  
16 between women of my generation of the diaspora,  
17 women of the diaspora, with their counterparts in  
18 Cuba. This was going to be a project, this was  
19 under the -- it was a cultural project. We  
20 thought we could meet in Cuba for a period of  
21 maybe five to seven days and tell our life stories  
22 being separated for all these years under two  
23 completely different systems.

24 And as a result of that interchange  
25 we would have a theater production called Entre

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1 Nosotras. I reached out to the UNEAC, the Union  
2 de Escritores y Artistas Cubanos, which is the  
3 cultural umbrella in Cuba, to support the project.  
4 And they enthusiastically supported this project.  
5 I had a theater director ready to put this  
6 production on and the Cuban Government canceled  
7 the project three days prior to departure. After  
8 a three year, I would say lobbying effort on my  
9 part, to make sure this project became a reality,  
10 they nixed it.

11 Q Did it ever become a reality?

12 A Never.

13 Q You sound resentful.

14 A Excuse me?

15 Q You sound resentful, after a lot of  
16 work involved in the project.

17 A It was a project that I put a lot of  
18 effort and I had a wonderful group of Cuban  
19 American women who were willing to put their lives  
20 aside for seven days to meet their counterparts.  
21 It was a project of reconciliation, which is my  
22 mission, and I got it axed three days before  
23 departure with tickets in my hand.

24 Q How do you find out that it was  
25 axed?

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1 A I had a call from Cuba, from the  
2 assistant of my counterpart, who was a  
3 vice-president of the UNEAC -- I'll give you that  
4 name -- telling me that the project had to be  
5 postponed, three days prior to departure.

6 Q When you say my counterpart, is it  
7 always the same counterpart or depends on the  
8 project?

9 A Depends on the project.

10 Q In this particular project, who was

11 your counterpart?

12 A Lisette Vila, V-i-l-a,

13 vice-president at the time of the UNEAC. She is

14 an artist.

15 Q And prior to that, in the Women's

16 Health in October of 2000, who was your

17 counterpart?

18 A Michelle Frank, psychologist.

19 Q Before that?

20 A I'm sorry, psychiatrist.

21 Q Before that, the Young Professional

22 Exchange in May of 2000, who was your counterpart?

23 A Miriam Rodriguez.

24 Q Before that who was your counterpart

25 with the Women's Health Exchange Program?

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1 A Michelle Frank.

2 Q April of 2001, according to your

3 Interrogatories, you went back for a Young

4 Professionals Exchange.

5 A Um-hmm.

6 Q Who was your counterpart for that

7 particular project?

8 A Miriam Rodriguez.



9 Q Whenever there was a Young  
10 Professional Exchange, was your counterpart always  
11 Miriam Rodriguez?

12 A Yes, sir.

13 Q Tell me about -- the Young  
14 Professional Exchanges, were they always the same  
15 concept, it was just different people you were  
16 taking back with the same mission statement: For  
17 the professionals to get to know each other  
18 between Cuba and the United States?

19 A Yes.

20 Q Did that concept ever change in any  
21 of the trips that you went on?

22 A No.

23 Q When you went in 2001 for the Young  
24 Professional Exchange, and specifically in April  
25 of 2001, do you remember where you stayed?

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1 A Tell me again the date.

2 Q April 23 to 28 of 2001.

3 A No. If you want me to, I will tell  
4 you the three hotels that we stayed.

5 Q Okay.

6 A But I have to go to my files to tell

7 you which one I stayed on each trip.

8 Q Sure.

9 A I can't remember. We stayed either  
10 at the Victoria Hotel, we stayed at the Verdado  
11 Hotel and we stayed at Los Frailes, F-r-a-i-l-e-s,  
12 Hotel.

13 Q Other than those three hotels, in  
14 any of your trips to Cuba through Puentes, have  
15 you stayed in any other hotels?

16 A Through Puentes I stayed at the  
17 Hotel Florida with the Women's Program. I was  
18 talking just about the Young Cuban-American  
19 Professionals.

20 Q Okay.

21 A I have stayed in lots of different  
22 hotels.

23 Q Since your October 24 to 26 of 2001  
24 Entre Nosotras, based on your testimony, that was  
25 the one that was canceled by the Cuban Government?

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1 A Yes.

2 Q So you went to Cuba in March of  
3 2001, setting the arrangements for the project,  
4 and then I guess you went back in November of 2001

5 to continue doing arrangements?

6 A No. The project was nixed in --

7 when did I tell you that I traveled in 2001?

8 Q I have here in your Interrogatory

9 Responses, it says -- I'm going to introduce it as

10 an exhibit and just attach it so the record is

11 clear.

12 A Okay.

13 (Thereupon, the referred-to document

14 was marked as Defendant's Exhibit

15 No. 1 for Identification)

16 BY MR. DORTA:

17 Q You indicated that you began --

18 A I think I need my glasses, but

19 anyway.

20 Q Do you have them?

21 A Somewhere.

22 Q Why don't you get them so you can

23 see. It's a good idea.

24 A I can see.

25 Q My wife says the same thing and she

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1 doesn't.

2 A I can see, trust me.

3 Q Okay. I can't see upside down.

4 A Okay, here, March, I went to do some  
5 of the preliminary arrangements and then I went  
6 back here in October. You going to ask me why?

7 Q Yes.

8 A Good. I'm delighted.

9 Q Because you indicated --

10 A It was nixed.

11 Q Let me go back and find out first,  
12 when was it nixed?

13 A It was nixed -- when did I tell  
14 you that I traveled? October what?

15 Q October 24 to 26 of 2001.

16 A It was nixed forty-eight hours  
17 before that trip, before that date.

18 Q But you ended up going anyways but  
19 not for that purpose?

20 A I will tell you exactly why I went.

21 Q Okay.

22 A When the Cuban Government, when this  
23 person from Cuba called me to say the project has  
24 been nixed, needless to say I was extremely upset.  
25 So I basically told them that they would have to

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1 tell me in person on the ground in Cuba why this  
2 happened, and this is exactly why I went.

3 I got on the plane, I went to Cuba.

4 I went directly to the Ministry of Foreign  
5 Affairs, to the Dacre office, for them to tell me  
6 exactly why they nixed the program.

7 Q What did they say?

8 A They said that it was not the time  
9 to have a program like this. They said that there  
10 was somebody in the program that they did not want  
11 in the program. And --

12 Q On your end?

13 A On my end.

14 Q Okay.

15 A That one of the women that I was  
16 bringing was not somebody that they necessarily  
17 agreed.

18 Q Who was that?

19 A Uva de Aragon. Because she spoke in  
20 Radio Marti. Because she wrote for the Diarios  
21 las Americas, et cetera.

22 Q So based on her position on various  
23 topics, the government wasn't happy with you  
24 bringing her?

25 A They were not happy. They didn't

1 think it was the time. So I basically said -- and  
2 they inferred that if I would change, it could be  
3 approved.

4 Q So if you left this one person at  
5 home and brought everybody else, it would be okay?

6 A It could be okay.

7 Q Did you do that?

8 A Of course not.

9 Q Why not?

10 A Because they do not tell me who I  
11 bring on my programs, just like I don't tell them  
12 who they bring on the programs to meet with my  
13 people.

14 Q So then you stayed there for two  
15 days?

16 A Yeah, specifically to get an answer  
17 to this, to my face.

18 Q Then once you got that answer, did  
19 you leave or did you visit family?

20 A Well, of course. I visit my family  
21 every time I go to Cuba. That's a given.

22 Q So then you were there two days and  
23 you went, ended up coming back home angry?

24 A Very disappointed.

25 Q You go back in November 2001 once

1 again with the Young Professional Exchange.

2 Anything in particular with regards to that trip

3 as to whom you take?

4 A No. It's the same format, different

5 people. One of the hotels.

6 Q One of the three --

7 A One of the three hotels that I

8 mentioned.

9 Q Return in Cuba then in April 8

10 through 13 of 2002, once again with the Young

11 Professional Exchange?

12 A Yes.

13 Q Same program, same concept?

14 A Exactly.

15 Q The people that you take with you on

16 this trip, I can only assume you have records as

17 to who was part of the program?

18 A Absolutely.

19 Q If I request these records, you

20 would be able to find them?

21 A Absolutely.

22 Q December 15 to 19 of 2002, you

23 indicate that you went to Cuba with regards to

24 Boca Museum of Art.

25 A Yes.

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1 Q Can you tell me about that?

2 A The Boca Museum of Art had wanted  
3 for a long time to do a cultural exchange with  
4 Cuba and they reached out to me to take them and  
5 we did. And we met with countless artists,  
6 painters, ceramicists, et cetera.

7 As a result of that, the Boca Museum  
8 of Art requested for a Cuban artist to come and do  
9 some kind of an internship there. It didn't  
10 happen but it was a very wonderful cultural  
11 exchange.

12 Q These programs that we are  
13 discussing, with the exception of the one in  
14 Camaguey, do they normally happen in Havana?

15 A Most of the times I go to Havana.

16 Q The application, I guess I'll call  
17 it, with regards to the Cuban Interest Section  
18 when you are going to present this program in  
19 December -- the program that you actually went to  
20 in December of 2002, is it always the same: You  
21 always have to go to the Cuban Interest Section to



22 say, "Hey, here is the program, do you approve"?  
23 A What did I do in 2002?  
24 Q I apologize. December 15 to 19,  
25 Boca Museum of Art. We were just talking about

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1 the Boca Museum of Art.  
2 A Yes, you have to basically tell them  
3 that you are taking a group to Cuba to meet with  
4 Cuban artists.  
5 Q And then you would present them  
6 I guess the brief synopsis?  
7 A A brief synopsis of the program.  
8 Q And you did that for each time that  
9 you made a travel to Cuba through Puentes?  
10 A I either did it in writing or I did  
11 it verbally. But you had to or you had no  
12 program.  
13 Q So it usually was in writing or  
14 verbally?  
15 A Absolutely.  
16 Q Any other means? Email?  
17 A I'm sure that I have used the email  
18 to contact my counterparts countless times.  
19 Q Do you have files for each program

20 that you have gone to?

21 A I have files for each trip that I  
22 have taken.

23 Q And in that file, would it consist  
24 of the program itself as to what it consisted of  
25 as well as the paperwork that was turned into the

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1 Cuban Interest Section?

2 A In most cases, if there was such a  
3 paperwork, it would be in the file.

4 Q What else would be in that file?

5 A Probably the cost of the trip,  
6 receipts for the trip. I'm sure some foundation  
7 correspondence.

8 Q Anything else?

9 A The name of the participants,  
10 itinerary, et cetera, et cetera.

11 Q Other than, please tell me the et  
12 cetera, et cetera. You may not think it's  
13 important but I do.

14 A Well, I'm trying to think of what  
15 else would be in the file besides the itinerary,  
16 any correspondence between myself and my  
17 counterparts, the foundation proposal and granting

18 of the money for the trip to go, the list of names  
19 and some receipts.

20 Q Where do you keep these files?

21 A In files.

22 Q Where?

23 A In my office, Puentes Cubanos.

24 Q At Puentes Cubanos' office?

25 A Yes.

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1 Q You indicated that at Puentes  
2 Cubanos you are receiving your last check now. Is  
3 there a reason for that? It's closing down?

4 A It's closing down as of June 30.

5 Q I'm going to get to the reasons why  
6 it was being closed down, or is being closed down.  
7 The files will be transferred to where?

8 A They are going to have to be put in  
9 storage.

10 Q But currently they are still at the  
11 Puentes Cubanos --

12 A Absolutely.

13 Q It's because it's open until June 30  
14 officially?

15 A Right.

16 Q Who is your counterpart for the Boca  
17 Museum of Art program?  
18 A I'm trying to think of the person's  
19 name. Oh, my God. Part of it was Alejandro  
20 Alonso from the Museum of the Ceramica. He was  
21 basically one of our main point persons in Cuba.  
22 Alejandro Alonso, Ceramica Museum and the Museum  
23 of Bellas Artists.  
24 And a person by the name of Aylet  
25 Ojeda. She is a curator at the Museum of Balles

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1 Artists in Havana.  
2 Q Any other counterparts that you  
3 recall?  
4 A Not that I recall.  
5 Q Was there ever a time that Puentes  
6 was neglected or denied the license to travel to  
7 Cuba through OFAC?  
8 A Not denied.  
9 Q Was there ever a time where the  
10 license expired?  
11 A The licenses were all revoked under  
12 President Bush's administration, so that the  
13 category of travel was no longer legal.

14 Q When was that?

15 A 2004.

16 Q So through --

17 A I believe 2004. My license expired

18 in 2004, I believe, the last time.

19 Q So it's fair to say then that the

20 last trip through Puentes Cubanos would have been

21 sometime in 2004 prior to the license expiring?

22 A Or prior, yes.

23 Q January 19 through January 23, 2003,

24 according to Interrogatories, you indicated you

25 went to Cuba for the Lawyers Exchange. Can you

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1 tell me about that program?

2 A That was the U.S. Cuban Legal Forum

3 here in Miami. They used my license to do their

4 trip to Cuba with the Asociacion de Juriste

5 Internacional.

6 Q Association of Jurists?

7 A Exactly.

8 Q And when you say they used your

9 license, what does that mean?

10 A They didn't have a license of their

11 own, so they could use my license for people to

12 people. This was a professional exchange with  
13 workshops and a presentation in Cuba with their  
14 legal counterparts in Cuba.

15 Q Did you accompany them on that trip?

16 A I accompanied them on the trip.

17 Q Whenever someone would use your  
18 license, would you have to go on the trip with  
19 them?

20 A I never gave my license to anybody  
21 unless I went on the trip with one exception.

22 Q Okay.

23 A The Washington Ballet. The artistic  
24 director of the Washington Ballet went to Cuba  
25 because he was very interested in bringing the

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1 prima ballerina to Washington, to the Kennedy  
2 Center, and of course it was totally legal for him  
3 to travel with my license to go.

4 Q Totally legal?

5 A Totally legal for him to travel with  
6 my license to do that. I did not travel with him;  
7 I didn't consider it necessary.

8 Q So that would be the only time that  
9 someone --

10 A The only time.

11 Q -- that someone traveled to Cuba  
12 with Puentes Cubanos' license without you being  
13 present?

14 A Exactly.

15 Q Were there other occasions where  
16 others wanted to borrow your license to go to Cuba  
17 and you went with them?

18 A There was not another time.

19 Q Okay.

20 A There were times when people  
21 wanted to borrow my license. My answer was no.

22 Q Your Lawyers Exchange Program, who  
23 was your counterpart for that particular program?

24 A I will try to remember his name in a  
25 minute. It was the president of the Guild. I

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1 will have to think of his name.

2 Q Okay. You think of it, just blurt  
3 it out, but let me know what it is.

4 A When I think of his name I will tell  
5 you.

6 Q Perfect.

7 You indicated in the Responses to

8 Interrogatories that in April of 2003 you  
9 traveled, and it says here JCC of Boca Raton,  
10 religious. What does that mean?  
11 A Okay. I did not travel with the  
12 Puentes license on this. The Jewish Community  
13 Center of Boca Raton wanted to go to Cuba to meet  
14 the Cuban Jewish community. I happen to have on  
15 my mother's side some Jewish ancestry and they  
16 contacted me because they had asked me if I wanted  
17 to take the trip. I told them that I was not  
18 Jewish, I had not been brought up in the Jewish  
19 faith. They basically said that they would not go  
20 with anybody but me. And we had been taking -- I  
21 have had the honor of taking them since 2003 until  
22 now on religion license. Religious license is  
23 given to an organization obviously that will be  
24 meeting with their religious counterparts in Cuba.  
25 They will take medicines, they will assist them in

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1 their faith. They will -- in this particular  
2 case, it's to preserve the Jewish traditions in  
3 Cuba, which are at peril because there is only  
4 less than 2000 Jews in Cuba.  
5 Q Was this religious license still



6 available during the course of the Bush

7 administration?

8 A Yes.

9 Q So that was not revoked?

10 A That was not revoked. Humanitarian  
11 licenses and religious licenses were mostly kept  
12 during the Bush administration; maybe with more  
13 restrictions, but they were kept.

14 Q And I see just based on your  
15 Responses to Interrogatories that a lot of the  
16 travel during the course of the Bush  
17 administration from 2004 onward was through the  
18 JCC of Boca Raton?

19 A Exactly.

20 Q And you had one medical humanitarian  
21 program in Camaguey in October of 2004?

22 A Exactly, which I went with my  
23 husband.

24 Q That was the trip you mentioned that  
25 you took with Dr. Wilhelm that he went with you to

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1 Camaguey earlier in the deposition?

2 A Exactly.

3 Q The last trip to Cuba that I have

4 here in your Interrogatory responses, November 5  
5 to 10, Art Institute of Chicago, cultural, 2003.

6 Can you tell me about that program?

7 A That was through Puentes Cubanos, I  
8 still had a license. Because of the Boca trip,  
9 one of the persons on the Board of Boca Museum of  
10 Art was also on the Board, was a sustained fellow  
11 of the Art Institute of Chicago. He convinced the  
12 Art Institute that it was time to do a cultural  
13 exchange with Cuba and I was honored to take him  
14 at that time. And as a result of that, they also  
15 requested a Cuban artist to go to the Art  
16 Institute. That was the whole point. They wanted  
17 to see the -- they wanted to engage with Cuban  
18 artists.

19 Q Fair to say that that was your last  
20 trip to Cuba through Puentes Cubanos?

21 A Probably so.

22 Q If there was another trip, would you  
23 have that in your records through Puentes?

24 A I would have it.

25 Q You mentioned earlier that Puentes

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2 of this year. Can you tell me why?

3 A Yes. Lack of funding.

4 Q Bad time in the economy?

5 A Could be a combination of bad time

6 in the economy, could be a combination of

7 foundations not wanting to continue funding

8 projects that are coming out of Miami because of

9 the political scenario. Could be because of

10 recent developments.

11 Q Let me just take those one by one.

12 Let's start with the one you just

13 said first, foundations are not wanting to fund

14 programs based on the recent developments from the

15 administration. Tell me what you mean by that.

16 A No, I don't mean by the

17 administration. I mean foundations that normally

18 fund Cuban driven projects are concentrating their

19 efforts in Washington because, in my case, in my

20 particular case, because of the stain that has

21 been put on my organization as a result of this

22 suit that I am involved in.

23 Q So based on your testimony, you

24 believe that the reason why foundations are not

25 funding Puentes Cubanos the way they were before

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1 is because of Mr. Simmons' allegations that

2 you are a Cuban agent?

3 A I believe it's a combination of many

4 things. There is no question that the economy

5 plays a role.

6 Q So number one we have --

7 A Okay.

8 Q Let me stop you there. Let me

9 finish. No. 1, we have the economic downtown and

10 the fact that we are in a recession. Yes?

11 A Yes, could be.

12 Q Could be?

13 A Could be.

14 Q Two, we have the fact that the Obama

15 administration is now revoking a lot of the things

16 that the Bush administration had put in. Is that

17 having an effect?

18 A I don't think that has an effect at

19 all.

20 Q Then we have what else? So far we

21 have the economy, possibly the economy?

22 A Possibly the economy.

23 Q Any other reason?

24 A Possibly the stain that has been put

25 on my projects.

1 Q That's two. Anything else?

2 A Then the third is that they probably  
3 want to concentrate all their strategy out of  
4 Washington and not Miami anymore.

5 Q When did they decide to do this?

6 A I have had basically no funding this  
7 year, minimal funding.

8 Q The year 2009?

9 A In the year 2009.

10 Q In the year 2008?

11 A In the year 2008 I had funding  
12 through November. The majority of the funding  
13 that I received in 2008 went for a radio program  
14 that we were supporting.

15 Q Which was what?

16 A La Noche se Mueve.

17 Q Roughly translates to the night  
18 moves?

19 A Yes, night moves.

20 Q Ms. Wilhelm, has there been any  
21 dissolution documents that are going to be filed  
22 in the State of Florida as to the fact that the  
23 corporation has been dissolved?

24 A Absolutely. My accountant is

25 already preparing them.

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1 Q You indicated that perhaps and  
2 maybe. Do you know that the foundation is not  
3 giving you money because of this alleged stain  
4 made by Mr. Simmons?

5 A I do not know it to be a fact.

6 Q Fair to say it hasn't been conveyed  
7 in writing to you: "Dear Ms. Wilhelm, because of  
8 the allegations, we are not going to be  
9 supporting --"

10 A It is fair to say.

11 Q So when you say that it could be, it  
12 could be a multiple of reasons why you're closing  
13 Puentes Cubanos because of the lack of funding?

14 A It could be.

15 Q You are assuming that this could be  
16 one of the reasons, correct, Mr. Simmons?

17 A I'm assuming that this is one of the  
18 reasons.

19 Q If I was to subpoena the records,  
20 banking records, from Puentes Cubanos, would I see  
21 a gradual decline in funding as the years passed?

22 A As of November, 2008, you will see a

23 significant decline on funding.

24 Q You indicated in your Amended

25 Responses to Interrogatories that you -- your

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1 damages for having to close down Puentes Cubanos

2 is approximately \$2,000 a month in lost revenue

3 that you will be taking in; is that correct?

4 A Yes.

5 Q As of right now at this moment,

6 there has been no loss of revenue through Puentes

7 Cubanos; is that correct?

8 A Unless you take into account

9 foundation support.

10 Q Foundation support, but money in

11 your pocket with regards to a salary, there has

12 been no effect, is that right?

13 A No effect.

14 Q When you say foundation support, you

15 can't say that the reason the foundation stopped

16 giving money to Puentes Cubanos is because of

17 Chris Simmons' statements on the Oscar Haza show,

18 can you?

19 MR. ROGOW: Object to the form, but

20 you can answer.

21 THE WITNESS: Can you repeat the  
22 question?

23 MR. DORTA: Sure.

24 (Thereupon, the question was read  
25 by the reporter as recorded)

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1 THE WITNESS: I cannot absolutely  
2 say that is the reason.

3 MR. DORTA: Off the record.

4 (Thereupon, there was a discussion  
5 off the record, after which the  
6 following proceedings were had:)

7 BY MR. DORTA:

8 Q Other than United States and other  
9 than Cuba, have you lived in any other countries?

10 A I lived in Spain.

11 Q How long ago did you live in Spain?

12 A I lived in Spain from June of 1965  
13 until -- probably only three months -- until  
14 September of 1965.

15 Q What brought you to Spain?

16 A My first husband took me to Spain.

17 Q Right after you were married?

18 A Right after we were married.



19 Q Was there a job waiting for him in  
20 Spain?

21 A It was a university waiting for him.

22 Q Was he a student at the time?

23 A He was supposedly going to finish  
24 his medical degree at the University of Madrid,  
25 the main university in Madrid.

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1 Q He was also a physician?

2 A He was not a physician.

3 Q Did he ever become a physician?

4 A He did not become a physician.

5 Q Did he ever conclude his studies in  
6 Spain?

7 A No, he didn't. We came back three  
8 months later. I got sick. The reason I got sick  
9 is because I had a dermatological condition caused  
10 by severe stress because I found out that he had  
11 lied to me.

12 Q He had lied to you?

13 A He had lied to me about having been  
14 a medical student in Cuba. So everything that we  
15 were doing in Spain was a lie.

16 Q Why would he go to Spain and start

17 doing classes because he lied to you, if you know?

18 A Do we have to get into this?

19 MR. ROGOW: No, just do it quickly.

20 THE WITNESS: I'll do it very

21 quickly. Basically we got married very

22 rapidly into our relationship and the

23 reason was that he had to leave for Spain

24 to conclude the medical education. At

25 that time a lot of Cuban-Americans who

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1 didn't have a penny to speak of would

2 rather go study abroad where they could

3 have a better -- they could be accepted

4 more rapidly and have some kind of

5 financial possibilities, and Spain was a

6 logical place for a lot of people who had

7 been in medical school in Cuba to finish

8 their degrees, either in Madrid or in

9 Salamanca.

10 He told me we had to get married

11 right away and leave for Spain to continue

12 his degrees because he had been accepted.

13 BY MR. DORTA:

14 Q How did you find out he was lying to

15 you?

16 A I found out he was lying to me

17 because when his grades came from the University

18 of Havana, they were grades in education.

19 Q Could you translate that for me?

20 A Education, school of education. So

21 it was quite a shock.

22 Q You have indicated because of this

23 you developed a dermatological condition?

24 A Yes.

25 Q What was the name of that condition?

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1 A Oh, I will have to ask my husband.

2 I don't remember.

3 Q Could you describe the symptoms that

4 you received as a result of this condition?

5 A I mean, I had some growth, red

6 thing, and I was treated -- mistreated, I was

7 actually burned by a medical school.

8 Q Where did you have --

9 A My legs.

10 Q Did you ever have these growths

11 again after the Spain --

12 A I get them all the time.

13 Q So you still get them?

14 A My dermatological system is quite  
15 compromised and so is my immune system.

16 Q So you still get these today?

17 A Yes, I do get them today and I'll  
18 get them tomorrow. I am getting ready for my nose  
19 to flare up when I'm under stress and I do get  
20 them.

21 Q When was the last time you got this  
22 particular ailment?

23 A On my knee?

24 Q Wherever.

25 A On my nose, last year.

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1 Q Do you get them in different places?

2 Is it a lesion? Am I describing it correctly?

3 A I have an immune system that is  
4 compromised. I have been put in the hospital  
5 sometimes, sometimes I have not. I have an immune  
6 system that is compromised. At any time it could  
7 flare up.

8 Q This is as a result of this stress,  
9 you said?

10 A Sometimes.

11 Q Was this brought about by some  
12 event, did something happen that you contracted  
13 this disease?

14 A In that case, probably it was the  
15 shock of being lied to.

16 Q Okay. Describe to me what it is  
17 that comes out on your skin.

18 A Bumps.

19 Q Red bumps, white bumps, yellow  
20 bumps?

21 A Red bumps.

22 Q Do they open up, is it like a sore?

23 A No.

24 Q How long do they last for?

25 A Depends on how it's treated.

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1 Q Say you go untreated. How long  
2 would it last for?

3 A I don't know. You'd have to ask a  
4 doctor.

5 Q Have you ever gone untreated?

6 A No.

7 Q When it's treated, how is it  
8 treated?

9 A Topical solutions.

10 Q When you put the topical solution,  
11 how long does the exposure last for?

12 A Hard to tell. Maybe a week,  
13 something like that.

14 Q Does anything other than stress  
15 bring about these bumps?

16 A My immune system is compromised. It  
17 could be at any point; I get a cold, I get a  
18 virus.

19 Q When were you diagnosed with this  
20 particular ailment?

21 A In Spain.

22 Q That was the first time?

23 A Yes.

24 Q You said in Spain that you were  
25 misdiagnosed?

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1 A I was mistreated.

2 Q Mistreated? How were you  
3 mistreated?

4 A They put a topical solution that  
5 burned my skin.

6 Q Do you have a scar as a result of

7 that?

8 A No, I don't have a scar.

9 Q On an estimate, how many times a  
10 year would you have this breakout of these bumps?

11 A Of those particular bumps, not  
12 necessarily have them all the time.

13 Q You have mentioned on more than one  
14 response that you have a dermatological immune  
15 deficiency.

16 A I do.

17 Q Do you know what that is called?

18 A Henoch schoenlein purpura. I'm  
19 sorry.

20 That is caused by an immune system  
21 that is compromised.

22 Q Obviously this is something that has  
23 been going on for years?

24 A It's been going on for years and it  
25 would get at times better and at times worse.

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1 Q Those bumps that you are describing,  
2 is it as a result of what you just said?

3 A No, the henoch came after the bumps.

4 Q So it's two different things?

5       A    The bumps could have caused  
6 eventually a compromise of the immune system that  
7 caused the henoch schoenlein purpura that has my  
8 immune system compromised.

9       Q    You mentioned that you had bumps on  
10 your legs and you have also gotten something in  
11 your nose. What you have gotten in your nose is  
12 the same thing that you had in your leg?

13       A    No, it's sores because of my immune  
14 system being compromised.

15       Q    Other than your nose, is there any  
16 other parts of your body where these sores appear?

17       A    I could have bruises appear for no  
18 reason whatsoever. But of course, my age now,  
19 bruises can appear for no reason whatsoever.

20       Q    Are you claiming that as a result of  
21 the damages you are seeking in this case, the  
22 particular ailment that you have --

23       A    Um-hmm.

24       Q    Yes?

25       A    Excuse me?

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1       Q    Are you claiming that this ailment  
2 has been aggravated by the alleged comments or the



3 comments that Mr. Simmons made on the Oscar Haza  
4 show?

5 A I'll tell you that I'm getting  
6 bruises much more often than I normally get, but  
7 I'm married to a physician.

8 Q Do you receive medical treatment for  
9 those --

10 A The bruises go away.

11 Q So you do not receive medical  
12 treatment for them?

13 A No, not at this point.

14 Q Have you received medical treatment  
15 for anything since October of last year?

16 A I live with a physician. No.

17 Q When you say you live with --

18 A My normal medical treatment.

19 Q So it has not been aggravated, your  
20 condition has not been aggravated?

21 A My stress level has been quite high.

22 Q Stress level, but your  
23 dermatological condition has not --

24 A No, I --

25 Q Your dermatological condition has

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1 not been aggravated?

2 A Not the dermatological condition.

3 Q Going back to where we left off

4 prior to the break, we were talking about Puentes

5 Cubanos and you were talking about having to shut

6 down Puentes Cubanos.

7 A Um-hmm.

8 Q You testified that there was no

9 officers in common between Puentes Cubanos and the

10 other association of the human rights, I forget

11 the name.

12 A Cuban-American Commission for Family

13 Rights.

14 Q Thank you. Is that correct, there

15 is no officers in common?

16 A Not that I can recall.

17 Q Is the Cuban-American Commission for

18 Family --

19 A -- Rights.

20 Q Does it go by any other name?

21 A No.

22 Q Is there a Spanish name to that?

23 A Well, the translated name, Comision

24 Cubana-Americana Por Derechos Familiares.

25 Q Is it in fact incorporated under the

1 Spanish name?

2 A It's incorporated under the Spanish  
3 name.

4 Q Is Max Castro an officer of that  
5 particular corporation?

6 A Not of that corporation.

7 Q Is he an officer of Puentes Cubanos?

8 A He is an officer of Puentes Cubanos.

9 Q Just so the record is clear, I'm  
10 going to show you, so you know how to write it,  
11 Comision Cubana-Americana Por Derechos Familiares:  
12 Is that the same company?

13 A Pro derechos familiares.

14 Q Por?

15 A Pro, that's how I believe it was  
16 incorporated.

17 Q I'm going to show your attorneys the  
18 document that I'm going to mark as two for  
19 identification. First document I'm going to mark  
20 as one is going to be the Interrogatory responses  
21 that you had.

22 (Thereupon, the referred-to document

23 was marked as Defendant's Exhibit

24 No. 2 for Identification)

25

1 BY MR. DORTA:

2 Q This document was pulled from the  
3 Internet and I realize that is not really a  
4 reliable source of information.

5 A No, it is not.

6 Q But now that you have your glasses,  
7 can you take a look at that particular document.  
8 It seems to be the incorporation of the entity you  
9 were describing. Does Max Castro appear as an  
10 officer?

11 A You asked me who was on the Board  
12 now, who was an Officer. Max Castro is no longer  
13 an officer of this corporation and neither is  
14 Lillian Manzor. The Board has changed in the five  
15 years of existence.

16 Q Pursuant to that document that I'm  
17 showing you, it shows that Max Castro is an  
18 officer. It's your testimony that he is no longer  
19 an officer?

20 A He is no longer an officer.

21 Q So currently he is not?

22 A He is no longer an officer of the  
23 corporation.

24 Q So currently he is not?

25 A He is not.

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1 Q But prior he was?

2 A Prior he was.

3 Q He was also an officer of Puentes

4 Cubanos, correct?

5 A He is an officer of Puentes Cubanos.

6 Q What happened that Max Castro is no

7 longer an officer of this particular entity that I

8 have shown you as Exhibit 2?

9 A He moved to Washington, I think it

10 was two and a half years ago, and he decided that

11 since he was not going to be in Miami, he could

12 not be a Board member that we can count on.

13 And in addition to that, he has been

14 sick, so he has basically not been active for the

15 last two and a half years.

16 Q But in Puentes Cubanos he is still

17 active?

18 A He is still active as of the end of

19 the month.

20 Q Okay. We'll attach that as an

21 exhibit to the deposition.

22 Are there any other officers that  
23 either now or in the past were in common between  
24 Puentes Cubanos and the entity we just discussed?

25 A No.

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1 Q So other than Silvia Wilhelm and Max  
2 Castro, there are no --

3 A No.

4 Q There are no other officers in  
5 common, either currently or in the past?

6 A Correct.

7 Q Okay. Is it fair to say that your  
8 position is one that the U.S. embargo against Cuba  
9 should be lifted; is that a fair statement?

10 A That's a fair statement.

11 Q Is that a popular position in South  
12 Florida?

13 MR. ROGOW: Objection to the form.

14 BY MR. DORTA:

15 Q If you know, you can answer.

16 MR. ROGOW: You can answer.

17 THE WITNESS: If by popular you mean  
18 the polls, yes, it is a popular position  
19 in South Florida as of today.

20 BY MR. DORTA:

21 Q Is there, outside the polls, would  
22 that be a popular position?

23 MR. ROGOW: Object again to the  
24 form.

25 THE WITNESS: Depends on who you

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1 spend your time with.

2 BY MR. DORTA:

3 Q You, in your position at Puentes  
4 Cubanos and various other organizations, have you  
5 been told that it is not a popular position?

6 MR. ROGOW: Object to the form.

7 You can answer.

8 THE WITNESS: By who?

9 BY MR. DORTA:

10 Q By anyone, at any time.

11 A Of course.

12 Q How often?

13 A Some members of my family, some  
14 people that I know that are friends.

15 Q Has anyone ever corresponded with  
16 you and said, hey, this is not a good position to  
17 have?

18 MR. ROGOW: Object to the form.

19 THE WITNESS: Corresponded and told

20 me this was not a --

21 BY MR. DORTA:

22 Q Sent you a letter saying, "I

23 disagree with your position on lifting the

24 embargo, I think it's a bad idea."

25 A To me directly or written it on the

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1 paper?

2 Q To you directly.

3 A I don't recall anybody -- well, I

4 have been threatened because of that position.

5 Q Okay.

6 A But not in writing.

7 Q When was that threat?

8 A Probably in 1997, '98, when I was

9 with the Cuban Committee for Democracy.

10 Q We are going to get to the Cuban

11 Committee for Democracy, but fair to say then that

12 you have received threats with regards to the

13 position you have had over these years?

14 A I have received threats.

15 Q Has anyone in your group -- by that



16 I mean Puentes Cubanos, other than you been  
17 threatened by anyone at any time as far as  
18 you know?

19 A I would imagine that Max Castro has  
20 also been threatened.

21 Q Do you know the extent of  
22 Mr. Castro's threats?

23 A No, I don't, I'm not familiar with  
24 the extent.

25 Q Do you know the circumstances with

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1 regards to Mr. Castro's, either one threat or  
2 multiple threats?

3 A No, I don't know.

4 Q With regards to you, how many times  
5 have you been threatened during the course of your  
6 involvement with Puentes Cubanos?

7 A You are talking about '97 when I was  
8 with the Cuban Committee for Democracy? You don't  
9 want to talk about that, you want to talk about  
10 Puentes Cubanos?

11 Q Yes, ma'am.

12 A Okay. I took a group to Washington,  
13 probably in 2000.

14 Q I'm going to cut you off, but let me  
15 just ask the question just generally: How many  
16 times have you been threatened?

17 A Physically threatened?

18 Q How many times have you been  
19 threatened, whether it's physically, verbally, any  
20 way that you have felt threatened because of  
21 something that someone has said to you.

22 A Oh, my goodness. Several times.

23 Q When you say several times, can you  
24 estimate for me?

25 A Less than a dozen. Maybe -- I can't

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1 quantify it.

2 Q So it's fair to say that at least  
3 more than ten times through Puentes Cubanos you  
4 have been threatened?

5 MR. ROGOW: Object to the form.

6 THE WITNESS: I consider a threat  
7 writing about me on the Internet some very  
8 difficult things, I consider that a  
9 threat. They might not have told me  
10 directly, but the fact that it is there,  
11 it is a threat to me.

12 BY MR. DORTA:

13 Q Okay. So then it is a fair  
14 statement that you have been threatened personally  
15 more than ten times since your involvement in  
16 Puentes Cubanos?

17 A I am pretty sure that is a fair  
18 statement.

19 Q Let's talk about these threats  
20 regarding Puentes Cubanos. You have mentioned the  
21 Internet. Can you tell me about that?

22 A About what?

23 Q About the Internet and how you felt  
24 threatened through the Internet.

25 A Well, there are many blogs, et

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1 cetera, that are very, very -- I would say  
2 egregious or whatever you want to call it, that  
3 have my name on it.

4 Q So there are references in blogs.  
5 What is a blog?

6 A It's a form of putting your ideas on  
7 the Internet and giving up-to-date information on  
8 topics of interest.

9 Q So someone like say me who decided

10 I'm going to post something on the Internet and I  
11 do that by way of a blog, is that right?  
12 A You could do that or you can send an  
13 email to a long list of people.  
14 Q But the blog would basically be for  
15 anyone who has access to see it, anyone can just  
16 go on and sign on, or you need to be special? I'm  
17 asking because I don't know.  
18 A I would imagine they can sign in and  
19 see it.  
20 Q And the particular blogs you are  
21 referring to, were they made by anyone in  
22 particular? Were they anonymous?  
23 A Oh, I think they are made by people  
24 in particular.  
25 Q Do they sign their name?

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1 A The person who writes the, whatever  
2 they write, usually signs the name.  
3 Q Specifically discussing the blogs  
4 you are referring to during your time at Puentes  
5 Cubanos, what was it about these blogs that made  
6 you feel threatened?  
7 A In South Florida to call you a

8 Communist or a Castro sympathizer simply because  
9 you oppose U.S. policy towards Cuba, I consider  
10 that to be a big threat to my physical wellbeing.

11 Q Why is that?

12 A Because there are some elements in  
13 the community that are rabid about the subject.  
14 And this community has a history of some violence  
15 associated with that in the past.

16 Q So you believe that if someone was  
17 to call you that, it would have an adverse effect  
18 on your safety?

19 A I would consider that so.

20 Q Prior to October of 2008, were you  
21 ever called a Communist, either in a blog or  
22 elsewhere?

23 A I'm sure that I have been.

24 Q Prior to October, 2008, were you  
25 ever called a Castro sympathizer?

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1 A I have been called a Castro  
2 sympathizer.

3 Q Other than those blogs that you  
4 discussed, were there any other threats that you  
5 may have received at any time during your time at

6 Puentes Cubanos?

7 A We have put some conferences  
8 together in Miami where the hotel security has had  
9 to call the police because of bomb threats in more  
10 than one occasion.

11 Q Okay.

12 A It happened at the Biltmore, it  
13 happened at Sofitel, it happened at some Embassy  
14 Suites. The bomb threats are a call that happens  
15 sometimes.

16 Q With regards to the blog, other than  
17 calling you a Communist or Castro sympathizer, was  
18 there ever any threat against you or your family  
19 or anything else that made you feel threatened?

20 A Over the phone.

21 Q Okay. Talking about the blogs  
22 specifically right now from your time at Puentes  
23 Cubanos.

24 A No.

25 Q So the extent of the blogs were them

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1 calling you Communist and Castro sympathizer. Any  
2 other things they wrote about you that you felt  
3 threatened about?

4       A    Until when?  Until now?

5       Q    Puentes Cubanos, to the present.

6       A    To the present?  Well, they called  
7  me a spy.

8       Q    And that's going to be after October  
9  2008?

10      A    That is after October 8, 2008.

11      Q    Before October 8, 2008, no one ever  
12 called you a spy?

13      A    No.  They called me all these other  
14 names.

15      Q    In regard to my question, before  
16 October, 2008, no one ever called you a spy?

17      A    Not that I recall.

18      Q    With regards to the bomb threats  
19 that you mentioned, you mentioned one in the  
20 Sofitel, one in the Biltmore and one in the  
21 Embassy Suites, all that happened during the  
22 course of your being executive director at Puentes  
23 Cubanos?

24      A    Um-hmm.

25      Q    Yes?

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1       A    Yes.

2           One with the Sofitel was Cuban

3   Committee for Democracy.

4           Q    So the Biltmore and the Embassy

5   Suites was part of your involvement --

6           A    With Puentes.

7           Q    Other than the bomb threats and

8   blogs, were there ever any other threats that were

9   made against you from your time at Puentes Cubanos

10   to the present?

11          A    I had an incidence once at my house,

12   I live in a condominium with security, by design,

13   I want to be there, that somebody tried to get

14   into my condominium.

15          Q    When was that?

16          A    This was about maybe four years ago

17   when we were taking a group to Washington

18   specifically to advocate for a lifting of the

19   travel restrictions. And this person felt very

20   strongly that that shouldn't happen, so he tried

21   to basically break into my house, but he was

22   stopped by security.

23          Q    Was there a police report that was

24   generated?

25          A    No, there was not, there was no

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1 police report.

2 Q Why not?

3 A I elected not to.

4 Q So it was your choice not to call

5 the police?

6 A When the security at my condominium

7 told him I was not going to see him, he left, so I

8 elected not to call the police.

9 Q Do you still consider that a threat?

10 A I would think that if I had not had

11 the security, it would have been a very, very

12 difficult situation at my house with this person.

13 Q Was this person armed?

14 A I don't know. I have no idea.

15 Q With regards to the bomb threats at

16 the Biltmore and the Embassy Suites, were there

17 ever any police reports generated as a result of

18 those incidents?

19 A I don't know exactly how the hotel

20 works. If the hotel gets a call, they immediately

21 notify the police. We always had security anyway.

22 Then they come to the organizers of the meeting to

23 alert us that there is a bomb threat and it is up

24 to us to either call the meeting off or to proceed

25 with the meeting.

1 Q They don't evacuate you?

2 A No, they did not evacuate us.

3 Q Have they ever evacuated you, either  
4 at the Biltmore or the Embassy Suites, when there  
5 was a bomb threat?

6 A They left it up to us to make the  
7 decision as to continue or not and we continued  
8 with the meeting.

9 Q Who provides the security for  
10 Puentes Cubanos?

11 A The security for Puentes Cubanos?

12 Q I'm sorry, you indicated that you  
13 have security that you hire.

14 A When you do a conference at the  
15 hotels, because of the nature of the conference,  
16 usually the hotel requires that you hire security.

17 Q Whom do you hire?

18 A Who does the hotel hire?

19 Q So the hotel is the one that is  
20 going to hire the --

21 A And I pay the bill to the hotel.

22 Q So the hotel makes the decision as  
23 to what security company they are going to employ  
24 to oversee?

25 A Whoever they told you.

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1 Q You don't say, I want Pepe from  
2 Wells Fargo to come in and protect us?

3 A No, I don't.

4 MR. ROGOW: Pepe from where?

5 MR. DORTA: Wells Fargo. He is very  
6 well known.

7 THE WITNESS: Pepe? No, I have  
8 never had Pepe.

9 BY MR. DORTA:

10 Q Would you say the goals from the  
11 Cuban-American Commission of Family Rights and  
12 Puentes Cubanos are different goals?

13 A We have different mission  
14 statements.

15 Q What is the difference?

16 A The mission statement of Puentes  
17 Cubanos is people to people work to promote  
18 engagement between the people of the United States  
19 and the people of Cuba.

20 The mission of the Cuban-American  
21 Commission for Family Rights is to make sure that  
22 the integrity of the Cuban family remains intact

23 and there is no interference, governmental  
24 interference.

25 Q Any other differences or

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1 similarities?

2 A We both promote engagement.

3 Q And by that you mean engagement in  
4 the --

5 A If you call family right engagement  
6 that everybody has a right to see their mother and  
7 their brother and their son whenever they deem it  
8 necessary or they want to, I think we promote  
9 engagement.

10 Q Going back to the threats, any other  
11 threats other than what we described or you  
12 described to me with regards to your time at  
13 Puentes Cubanos?

14 A Not that I can recall.

15 Q Have there ever been any, "I'm going  
16 to kill you," threats, meaning those direct  
17 threats, as far as you know?

18 A With Puentes Cubanos?

19 Q With Puentes Cubanos.

20 A I am going to kill you threat, no.

21 Q Or I'm going to harm you, I'm going  
22 to cause you physical harm, anything to that  
23 effect, where it's very direct, it's not assuming  
24 this is going to happen, but someone actually  
25 saying, "I'm going to do this to you"?

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1 A Nobody told me directly while I was  
2 at Puentes Cubanos.

3 Q Does Puentes Cubanos keep records of  
4 the bomb threats or the blogs? Is there like a  
5 file that is all printed out in case, God forbid,  
6 something happens, someone can actually look at it  
7 and say, "Hey, look at all these credible  
8 threats"?

9 A No.

10 Q Is there any means that you all  
11 monitor?

12 A What did you say?

13 Q Is there a means of monitoring the  
14 threats?

15 A No.

16 Q Through Puentes Cubanos?

17 A No.

18 Q Let's talk about the Americans for

19 Humanitarian Trade with Cuba.

20 A Um-hmm.

21 Q What was that?

22 A That was an organization created in  
23 Washington to bring to light the necessity to end  
24 the embargoes of food and medicine to Cuba.

25 Q When were you part of that

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1 organization?

2 A I think it was '88, '89 -- I mean  
3 '98, '99. '99, 2000. You have to look at my  
4 report.

5 2000, 2001. Right when -- I was on  
6 the Board from the inception and then I was  
7 executive director for a very brief period of  
8 time.

9 Q According to your Responses to  
10 Interrogatories, 1999 to 2000; does that sound  
11 right?

12 A Yes.

13 Q And you mentioned you were their  
14 executive director?

15 A Very briefly.

16 Q Why was it a brief -- why was it

17 briefly?

18 A I was on the Board from the  
19 inception. I was executive director very briefly  
20 because of my commitment to Puentes Cubanos. I  
21 found that I could not do both.

22 Q Why not?

23 A Too much work and they also asked me  
24 to be in Washington for longer periods of time  
25 than I cared to be. It was based in Washington.

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1 Q Now that Puentes Cubanos is going to  
2 wrap up in late June of this year, what is your  
3 plan as to what to do next?

4 A I am going to stay with the  
5 Cuban-American Commission for Family Rights.

6 Q But you don't draw a salary from  
7 them.

8 A They cover my expenses when needed.

9 Q Let's go back to that. You  
10 indicated that you didn't receive a salary from  
11 them, but when you say that they cover your  
12 expenses, what does that mean?

13 A Well, if I travel on something  
14 related to the Commission, if there is a period of

15 time and we do extensive work that requires a --  
16 then I might get compensated for the travel. My  
17 expenses are covered.

18 Q Other than your expenses, does that  
19 organization provide any other benefit to you  
20 personally, Silvia Wilhelm?

21 A No, no. Once in a while they will  
22 compensate me for some specific job that gets  
23 done, but I do not have a salary with them.

24 Q How often does that occur?

25 A Let's see. It has been in existence

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1 for five years. I would say less than half.

2 Q Less than half of the five years?

3 A Yes.

4 Q How often per year would that be  
5 that you get specially compensated?

6 A Oh, my goodness. \$3000, \$4000.

7 Q How often, in that one year period,  
8 does that occur? Once a month, twice a month,  
9 once every five months?

10 A Once every two or three months.

11 Q What is the most they paid you on a  
12 special compensation type?



13 A What did you say?

14 Q What is the most they paid you at  
15 one time?

16 A The most they paid me at one time, I  
17 would have to go back to the book, but maybe  
18 \$2000.

19 Q With regards to the Americans for  
20 Humanitarian Trade with Cuba, you indicated that  
21 you were on the Board since its inception?

22 A Um-hmm.

23 Q Was that also a nonprofit company?

24 A It was a not-for-profit company,  
25 yes.

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1 Q Any of the officers from that  
2 company sort of migrated with you to Puentes  
3 Cubanos?

4 A Not to Puentes Cubanos.

5 Q Anywhere else?

6 A To the Commission.

7 Q To the Commission?

8 A Um-hmm.

9 Q Who is that?

10 A Alfredo Duran was an active member

11 of the Americans for Humanitarian Trade with Cuba.

12 Q Anyone else?

13 A No.

14 Q Who held the position of executive

15 director at Americans for Humanitarian Trade with

16 Cuba prior to you?

17 A Who was the person?

18 Q Yes.

19 A Lisa Weinmann.

20 Q And what happened that you took over

21 Ms. Weinmann's duties?

22 A I believe it was when she was taking

23 some maternal leave for her first baby.

24 Q Did you travel to Cuba through this

25 particular group?

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1 A Never.

2 Q So there was no traveling to Cuba?

3 A Never.

4 Q Were you paid?

5 A No. Only compensate -- only I

6 presented my expenses for the travel to

7 Washington.

8 Q So you were reimbursed?

9 A I was reimbursed.

10 Q Not compensated?

11 A Not compensated.

12 Q Prior to being involved with this

13 group, where did you work?

14 A Cuban Committee for Democracy.

15 Q What was your position there?

16 A Executive director.

17 Q Did you always hold that position?

18 Did anyone else hold it prior to you?

19 A Two persons held it prior to me.

20 Q Who were they?

21 A The first executive director of the

22 CCD was Lillian Pubillones and the second one was

23 Christine -- I don't know, she is an aide to

24 Senator Kennedy. I don't remember her name.

25 Q How did you get involved with the

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1 CCD?

2 A I got involved in the CCD when I was

3 a student at American University in Washington. I

4 was taking a course in -- basically that had to

5 deal with U.S. policy towards Latin America and I

6 had a paper to do specifically on Cuba and my

7 paper had to do with presenting three different  
8 positions with regards to the Cuban policy.  
9 That's when I met the CCD.

10 Q Is that when you started becoming  
11 involved with the different groups, after you  
12 started doing this paper?

13 A After I started doing the paper,  
14 yes.

15 Q Prior to that you hadn't been  
16 involved in any of the groups having to advocate  
17 an end to embargo or anything to that effect?

18 A Exactly.

19 Q So the paper sort of opened your  
20 eyes?

21 MR. ROGOW: Object to the form.

22 THE WITNESS: The paper gave me a  
23 better understanding of the different  
24 positions.

25

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1 BY MR. DORTA:

2 Q So that would have been the one  
3 catalyst that you began?

4 A You know, it was my own -- the

5 catalyst was my own self education in the process.

6 Q And this began in Washington,  
7 D.C. while you were at American University?

8 A It began when I landed in Cuba in  
9 May of 1994 and I saw how this policy hurts the  
10 Cuban people.

11 Q When you went back the first time?

12 A Exactly.

13 Q And this particular -- the CCD, was  
14 that a Florida corporation or was that a D.C.?  
15 Where was that incorporated, if you know?

16 A I think the CCD is a Florida  
17 corporation.

18 Q The Board members would meet here or  
19 in Washington?

20 A Well, the CCD was founded probably  
21 fifteen years ago or so. It has gone through an  
22 array of different Board members and they  
23 encompass people from not only Florida but New  
24 Jersey, California, the midwest. It's a national  
25 organization.

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1 Q So when you were going to have a  
2 meeting, you would have a meeting in different

3 locations each time? Was there a home base?

4 A Usually you had your meetings in  
5 Miami, but you could have -- we have had meetings  
6 in Washington, D.C..

7 Q Okay. Is it still in existence  
8 today?

9 A The CCD is still in existence.

10 Q What made you leave the CCD?

11 A I left the CCD because I found their  
12 mission statement to be extremely convoluted. I  
13 did not find that the Board was unanimous in  
14 supporting the mission statement and it made my  
15 job as an executive director extremely difficult.

16 Q What was the CCD's mission  
17 statement?

18 A The CCD's mission statement was for  
19 a peaceful transition to democracy in Cuba.

20 Q And how is that convoluted?

21 A The basic premise of the CCD was  
22 that U.S. foreign policy towards Cuba is failed.  
23 And yet there were people in the CCD that  
24 supported the embargo. So I found a Board that  
25 was extremely paralyzed in terms of strategy.

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1 Q Okay.

2 (Thereupon, a brief recess was  
3 taken, after which the following  
4 proceedings were had:)

5 (Defendant Chris Simmons attended  
6 for the remainder of the  
7 deposition.)

8 BY MR. DORTA:

9 Q So you believe then that the proper  
10 strategy would be to be with the Board that --

11 MR. ROGOW: Object to the form, but  
12 you can answer.

13 THE WITNESS: I believe the proper  
14 strategy is to have a Board that is  
15 absolutely in sync with each other.

16 BY MR. DORTA:

17 Q And you didn't find that in the CCD?

18 A I did not find that in the CCD.

19 Q When did you leave the CCD?

20 A The spring of 1999.

21 Q I may have asked this and I  
22 apologize: Were you paid at the CCD?

23 A I certainly was.

24 Q How much did you earn?

25 A In the 20's and 30's. I can't give

1 you a complete answer unless I check my records.

2 Q That's twenty to \$30,000?

3 A Yes.

4 Q A year?

5 A A year.

6 Q Did you keep a list of donors, did

7 you personally keep a list of donors with that

8 particular organization?

9 A No. We had a treasurer.

10 Q And how were you funded?

11 A Foundation money and membership.

12 Q Other than that, any other forms of

13 funding?

14 A Not that I know of.

15 Q Did you travel to Cuba during your

16 course of your time with the CCD?

17 A Yes, I did.

18 Q How many occasions?

19 A Once with the CCD.

20 Q Once? Do you remember when that

21 was?

22 A Let's see. I have a granddaughter

23 who is twelve years old and she must have been

24 three to six months, so.

25 Q 1996?



1       A    Start backing up. Yeah, I went  
2 to see family and I also traveled with the  
3 president of the CCD and the ex-president of the  
4 CCD at the time.

5       Q    According to your Responses to  
6 Interrogatories, you indicated that in February of  
7 1996 you had a family visit. Is it your testimony  
8 that you also had a visit with the CCD during that  
9 same trip?

10      A    Yes, I did.

11      Q    What was the purpose of your trip  
12 with the CCD?

13      A    The purpose of the trip with the CCD  
14 was to convince the Cuban Government that there  
15 was a need for a national dialogue with  
16 Cuban-Americans.

17      Q    Who did you meet with?

18      A    We met with Miguel Alvarez at the  
19 National Assembly and he had somebody else with  
20 him at the time and I'm trying to remember his  
21 name. Somebody from the Assembly. What was his  
22 name? It will come to me.

23      Q    Okay. Anybody else you remember

24 meeting with from the Cuban government other than  
25 Miguel Alvarez?

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1 A We met Soto. Soto came to see us.

2 Q When you say Soto?

3 A Amado Soto.

4 Q You met with Mr. Amado Soto as early

5 as '96, February of '96?

6 A That's when I met Amado Soto.

7 Q That's the first time?

8 A The first time I met Amado Soto.

9 Q In your Responses to

10 Interrogatories, 1994 to '99, you indicated family

11 visits. Did any of these family visits also

12 encompass you going with the group as you did in

13 '96 with the CCD?

14 A I didn't go -- I went with my

15 family. The two presidents of the CCD were in

16 Cuba and we made some visits since the three of us

17 were in Cuba at that time.

18 Q That would have been in '96?

19 A Yeah, it must have been in '96 after

20 my granddaughter was like three or six months, I

21 don't remember exactly. I had my daughter in Cuba

22 with me, my son-in-law, my husband.

23 Q And the May '94 visit which you went  
24 for the first time, did you meet with any Cuban  
25 officials with regards to that visit? Because you

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1 say a family visit; that's why I'm asking.

2 A May, '94?

3 Q Yes, ma'am.

4 A No, sir.

5 Q Your family visit in 1997, did you  
6 meet with any Cuban officials during that time?

7 A I don't recall.

8 Q The family visit in 1998, did you  
9 meet with any Cuban officials during that visit?

10 A I don't recall.

11 Q Family visit in '99, did you meet  
12 with any Cuban officials during the course of that  
13 visit?

14 A When was that visit?

15 Q It just says '99 family visit.

16 A I probably could have but I can't  
17 give you a specific time or person at the time.

18 Q Okay. You testified earlier in the  
19 deposition that you went through Puentes Cubanos

20 for the Women's Health Exchange Program. You  
21 talked about your counterpart and you talked about  
22 the program. What I didn't ask you was whether or  
23 not there was any Cuban officials that you met  
24 with in Cuba as a result of that program.

25 A Oh, yes.

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1 Q Who would they be?

2 A We had to meet with the  
3 Vice-Minister of Health at the time.

4 Q Who was that?

5 A Jose Cardenas.

6 Q Who else?

7 A We met with doctors, Cuban doctors.

8 Q That were part of the government?

9 A Well, they are part of the Minister  
10 of Health. I believe they are probably part of  
11 the government if they are working for the  
12 Minister of Health.

13 Q Did you meet with anyone other than  
14 doctors?

15 A At that meeting?

16 Q Yes, ma'am.

17 A With my women physicians?

18 Q Yes, ma'am.

19 A Not that I recall.

20 Q Okay. The May 2nd to May 6, 2000

21 Young Professional Exchange, we covered your

22 counterpart with regards to that. Did you meet

23 with any Cuban officials with regards to that

24 meeting?

25 A Which time was that?

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1 Q That was the Young Professional

2 Exchange, the very first one in May 2nd to May 6

3 of 2000.

4 A I don't know if apart from the

5 university -- I'm trying to remember who the

6 participants were and maybe I'll know better.

7 Q Sure.

8 A I don't recall.

9 Q International Symposium of Women's

10 Health in October of 2000, did you meet with any

11 Cuban officials from the Cuban Government during

12 that particular program?

13 A In Santiago?

14 Q Wherever it was, this was the one

15 that was October 13 to 29 of the year 2000.

16       A    No. Unless you assume that the  
17 doctors are all working for the government and  
18 then, you know, then --

19       Q    The March, 2001, you indicated with  
20 regards to the preliminary arrangements in Entre  
21 Nosotras that you went to Cuba to do the ground  
22 work, prior testimony. Did you meet with any  
23 Cuban officials with regard to this particular  
24 preparation?

25       A    Yes, I did.

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1       Q    Who was that?

2       A    I met with the people from the  
3 foreign ministry, an office called Dacre.

4       Q    Can you spell that?

5       A    D-a-c-r-e. It stands for -- I don't  
6 know if I have to translate or not. Direccion.

7       Q    Direction?

8       A    Yes, de Asuntos.

9       Q    Of things?

10      A    Cubanos Residentes en la Exterior.

11      Q    Cuban residents in the exterior.

12      A    It's the office within the Ministry  
13 of Foreign Affairs that deals with Cubans who no

14 longer live in Cuba.

15 MR. SIMMONS: Cubans living abroad.

16 THE WITNESS: Exactly. Thank you.

17 BY MR. DORTA:

18 Q And Ms. Wilhelm, do you remember who  
19 you met with in that particular office?

20 A It was probably the guy who was head  
21 of that office then, who I think at the time was  
22 Jose Cabanas.

23 Q Anyone else?

24 A Yes. We met with Soto.

25 Q When you say Soto?

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1 A Amado Soto.

2 Q Anyone else?

3 A Well, we met with the people from  
4 the UNEAC, the Ministry of Culture. They worked  
5 for the Ministry of Culture.

6 Q Anyone else?

7 A I'm trying to remember.

8 Q Take your time.

9 A I don't know.

10 Q Okay. The Young Professional  
11 Exchange in April of 2001, did you meet with any

12 Cubans officials from the Cuban Government during  
13 the course of that program?

14 A Which program was that?

15 Q That would be the April 2001 Young  
16 Professional Exchange.

17 A It's hard for me to tell you  
18 specifically which Cuban official we met on what  
19 particular trip. But as a generality, all right,  
20 we met with our counterparts at the University of  
21 Havana, we met with Amado Soto. Sometimes,  
22 sometimes not. We could have met a couple of  
23 times with persons representing Dacre, and that  
24 was about it that I can recall.

25 Q Any other names of any other Cuban

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1 official that you have met through in your  
2 capacity of your travels to Cuba that we have not  
3 already covered?

4 A The names that I provided you.

5 Q Fernando Remirez de Estenoz?

6 A Estenoz.

7 Q Dagoberto Rodriguez?

8 A Um-hmm.

9 Q Yes?



10       A    Yes.

11       Q    Jorge Bolanos?

12       A    Yes.

13       Q    Jose Cabanas?

14       A    Yes.

15       Q    Benigno Perez?

16       A    Yes.

17       Q    Carlos Zamora?

18       A    Right.

19       Q    Ricardo Alarcon?

20       A    Right.

21       Q    Miguel Alvarez?

22       A    Yes.

23       Q    Amado Soto?

24       A    Right.

25       Q    Other than those officials and those

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1   individuals that you mentioned during the course  
2   of this deposition, is it fair to say you met with  
3   no other officials during the course of your  
4   travels to Cuba, and by officials I mean officials  
5   involved in the Cuban Government.

6       A    That I'm aware of.

7       Q    Would they be written down anywhere?

8 A Uh-uh.

9 Q No?

10 A No.

11 Q You keep a journal?

12 A No, I don't keep a journal.

13 Q Do you keep records?

14 A Not necessarily.

15 Q When you have these meetings with  
16 these individuals, do you notate the substance of  
17 the meeting?

18 A Do I notate the substance of the  
19 meeting? Not necessarily.

20 Q Do you write a summary, write a  
21 report for the Board members back at whatever  
22 organization you are going through?

23 A I have absolutely provided summaries  
24 to my Board.

25 Q These summaries that you provided,

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1 what is the context of the summaries?

2 A Basically what the status of the  
3 projects were, whether they were moving along,  
4 whether they were going to be accepted or not, et  
5 cetera.

6 Q The summaries of the projects, would  
7 they be in those files that we discussed earlier  
8 in the deposition that you keep per project?

9 A They could be.

10 Q Would they be anywhere else?

11 A They could be on the Boards of the  
12 meaning at any given time.

13 Q You mean the minutes?

14 A The minutes.

15 Q Who keeps these minutes of the  
16 meeting?

17 A I keep them.

18 Q Are they recorded?

19 A No. They are -- I mean, they are  
20 transcribed.

21 Q You don't have a lady like this  
22 sitting --

23 A No, I don't have a court reporter.

24 Q So they are basically recorded and  
25 then transcribed or are they transcribed as they

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1 happen?

2 A They are transcribed as they happen.

3 Q So if the summaries for the projects

4 are not in the actual files, there would be no

5 minutes of the Board?

6 A Um-hmm.

7 Q Yes?

8 A Some of them, yes.

9 Q This would be in Puentes Cubanos?

10 A Yes.

11 Q And it would also be for the

12 Commission for the Cuban Rights?

13 A That's not the Commission for the

14 Cuban Rights.

15 Q I'm sorry, the Cuban-American -- I

16 forget the name. Cuban-American Commission for

17 Family Rights; is it the same story there, whereby

18 the summaries are kept in the files as given

19 to the Board or is it just for Puentes?

20 A Maybe just for Puentes.

21 Q So the Cuban-American Commission for

22 Family Rights, any trips that were taken as a

23 result of that would not have summaries in its

24 file?

25 A Not that I recall.

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1 Q The corporations that you have

2 worked for have all been nonprofit. Is there a  
3 reason for that?

4 A I don't want to make any profit out  
5 of the Cuban dilemma.

6 Q Why not?

7 A Because I think it would compromise  
8 my advocacy work.

9 Q You testified that once Puentes  
10 Cubanos wraps up at the end of this month, you  
11 will concentrate your efforts in the  
12 Cuban-American Commission for Family Rights. Do  
13 you have any other plans other than that?

14 A I plan to eventually, when travel is  
15 open to Cuba, when all Americans are able to  
16 travel to Cuba, I want to continue taking  
17 Americans and Cuban-Americans on very specific  
18 trips, purposeful travel, to Cuba to continue  
19 engagement and continue fomenting reconciliation.  
20 Yes, I have those plans in the future.

21 Q Okay. Have you taken any steps to  
22 assure those plans into fruition?

23 A We have incorporated a company.

24 Q What is that company called?

25 A Cuba Puentes.

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1 Q So it's almost the name Puentes

2 Cubanitos backwards?

3 A Well, if you want to call it that.

4 Q Fair to say you incorporated that

5 company last month?

6 A The idea of bridges --

7 Q Did you answer my question?

8 A What did you say?

9 Q Is it fair to say that you

10 incorporated that company last month?

11 A We incorporated that company last

12 month.

13 Q A month before you announced the

14 closure of Puentes Cubanitos?

15 A I did.

16 Q Is the closure of Puentes Cubanitos

17 public knowledge, have you submitted a press

18 release?

19 A No, I have not submitted a press

20 release.

21 Q Have you written a memo to the Board

22 indicating that the company is going to be closed?

23 A We have written a memo to the Board

24 and I have every Board person's agreement that the

25 company needs to close.

1 Q The memo that circulated to the  
2 Board, was there justification as to why you had  
3 to close down Puentes Cubanos?

4 A The justification was lack of  
5 funding.

6 Q Other than that, was there anything  
7 else put in that memo?

8 A Not that I recall.

9 Q Did you author that memo yourself?

10 A I did.

11 Q Do you have a copy of that memo?

12 A I do.

13 Q I'm going to ask for a copy of it,  
14 if you can get that to your lawyer so I can see  
15 that memo, okay?

16 A Yes.

17 Q Other than the memorandum that was  
18 given to the Board where they all agreed, was  
19 there any other action taken when you were  
20 wrapping up Puentes Cubanos?

21 A Contacting my --

22 MR. ROGOW: -- accountant?

23 THE WITNESS: Accountant, thank you,

24 Bruce. My accountant.

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1 BY MR. DORTA:

2 Q The Cuba --

3 A I also --

4 Q I'm sorry.

5 A I have also told one of the funders  
6 that I am not -- that Puentes Cubanos will close  
7 at the end of June.

8 Q You incorporated Cuba Puentes in May  
9 of 2009?

10 A Um-hmm.

11 Q Yes?

12 A Yes.

13 Q Who are the officers of that  
14 company?

15 A Victoria Zamorano, myself and my  
16 husband.

17 Q And have you received any funding  
18 for that company?

19 A None whatsoever.

20 Q The difference is that this company  
21 is a For-Profit corporation, is that correct?

22 A For the future, yes.



23 Q So this is a company that you have  
24 for the future, not for the present; is that  
25 right?

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1 A Not for the present.

2 Q You decided to open it last month  
3 because you were planning for the future or  
4 because --

5 A I have a plan for the future. And  
6 if I can elaborate?

7 Q Sure.

8 A There is legislation in Congress  
9 right now to open travel. When and if that  
10 happens, there will be a need for people to be  
11 taken to Cuba, and I plan to continue doing my  
12 engagement.

13 Q Okay. How?

14 A Taking groups of Cuban-Americans to  
15 Cuba eventually.

16 Q Without any restrictions?

17 A Without any restrictions.

18 Q So that the difference between what  
19 you have done up to now and what you plan on doing  
20 in the future with Cuba Puentes is that there just

21 won't be any restrictions?

22 A There won't be any restrictions on  
23 travel.

24 Q You take the groups to Cuba and you,  
25 your company, would make money how?

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1 A Well, the people would pay to go and  
2 there will be a very basic -- some kind of profit  
3 at the end. When and if it happens. We are not  
4 there yet.

5 Q Does Cuba Puentes have a bank  
6 account?

7 A No.

8 Q Has Cuba Puentes applied for a tax  
9 I.D. number?

10 A We have -- no, we don't.

11 Q Does Max Castro have anything to do  
12 Cuba Puentes?

13 A No.

14 Q Mr. Duran have anything to do with  
15 Cuba Puentes?

16 A No.

17 Q Who is Victoria Zamorano?

18 A A Cuban-American.

19 Q What is her relationship to you?

20 A Her mother and my uncle were married

21 for twenty-some years.

22 Q Does Ms. Zamorano have any

23 involvement in Puentes Cubanos?

24 A None.

25 Q Does Ms. Zamorano have any

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1 involvement in the Cuban-American Commission for

2 Human Rights?

3 A For Family Rights. None.

4 Q Does she have any involvement in any

5 of the groups you have been involved with in the

6 past?

7 A None.

8 Q Did you file an income tax report

9 last year?

10 A We asked for an extension.

11 Q When was the last time you filed an

12 income tax?

13 A Last year, for the year before.

14 Q For the 2007?

15 A Yes.

16 Q You file that jointly with your

17 husband?

18 A Yes, I do.

19 Q How much did you earn in the year

20 2007?

21 MR. ROGOW: When you say you?

22 MR. DORTA: You, you.

23 MR. ROGOW: You are talking Silvia

24 Wilhelm?

25 THE WITNESS: I don't recall the

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1 exact amount, but it was in the early

2 thirties, I believe.

3 BY MR. DORTA:

4 Q How much do you estimate you earned

5 in the year 2008, and when I say you, I mean

6 Silvia Wilhelm.

7 A Less.

8 Q Less than thirty?

9 A Yes.

10 Q Is there a reason for that?

11 A 2008?

12 Q Yes, ma'am.

13 A Well, I earned the twenty-four. I

14 always earn the twenty-four.

15 Q When you say twenty-four, is that

16 the --

17 A Thousand, that Puentes pays me. And

18 I have taken some groups to Cuba that I told you

19 I'm paid a per diem and a consultant fee. And I

20 earned less last year than I earned in 2007 but we

21 haven't finished the income tax yet. We asked for

22 an extension. We always ask for an extension.

23 It's routine at my house.

24 Q You indicated in your Responses to

25 Interrogatory that you testified in the spring of

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1 1999 before the House, Ways and Means Committee.

2 Can you tell me about that?

3 A Yes. It was during the discussion

4 in Congress about the embargo of food and medicine

5 and I was asked to testify as how that embargo

6 punished unduly the people of Cuba. And I

7 testified on behalf of the CCD.

8 Q Who asked you to testify?

9 A The assistant -- the Chief of Staff

10 of the then -- the Chief of Staff of Charlie

11 Rangel, who was the ranking democrat on the

12 committee.

13 Q Before that, had you ever testified  
14 before a Congressional body?

15 A No.

16 Q After that have you since testified  
17 in front of another Congressional body?

18 A No, I haven't.

19 Q That was your one and only time?

20 A I sent a note for the record, that  
21 was my only time. I sent a note for the record.

22 Q So you didn't go in person?

23 A No, I didn't.

24 Q And you provided that in your  
25 Responses to Request to Produce?

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1 A I believe I did.

2 Q Have you ever spoken before any  
3 local government committees?

4 A Local government committees? Can  
5 you be more specific?

6 Q Local government, any kind of  
7 committee for Miami-Dade County that has asked for  
8 you to come and speak?

9 A On what subject?

10 Q On any subject at any time for any

11 reason?

12 A No.

13 Q How about a state or national,  
14 whereby they asked you to come in and speak for  
15 any reason at any time?

16 A No.

17 Q You indicated in your  
18 Interrogatories that you made various television  
19 appearances.

20 A I have made some.

21 Q What is your very first memory of a  
22 television appearance?

23 A Are you talking about 6:00 news? Do  
24 you consider that a television appearance? I  
25 don't remember when my first, you know, being

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1 televised at some event, some conference or some  
2 statement for the record was on local TV. I  
3 cannot give you a date.

4 Q So it's fair to say you have been on  
5 TV on more than one time?

6 A I have been on TV more than one  
7 time.

8 Q How many times have you been on TV,

9 approximately? I'm not going to hold you to a  
10 number.

11 A If you are talking about -- are you  
12 making a differentiation on specific programs that  
13 I have agreed to go and present versus being at a  
14 conference where a TV camera comes and just films  
15 you? I mean, are you making a differentiation?

16 Q No.

17 A You are not?

18 Q I'm sorry, on television. I turn it  
19 on and I see you.

20 A Well, you will have to tell me,  
21 since you have seen me. I have no idea. Several  
22 occasions. I have been at press conferences. I  
23 have been at advocacy events. I have been at real  
24 conferences and I have been asked to appear on a  
25 couple of these TV programs and local TV programs

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1 in Miami. I was on a documentary with Dan Rather.

2 I was asked to speak at the Lehrer Report once.

3 Q I'm going to go into all the  
4 specific people. Would you say that you have been  
5 on television more than twenty-five times?

6 A Since when?



7 Q Ever.

8 A Ever? Maybe.

9 Q Okay.

10 A Maybe not.

11 Q You testified in your

12 Interrogatories -- actually you wrote sworn

13 responses, the Maria Elvira show. When was it you

14 were on that show?

15 A Oh, my God. Maria Elvira's, I have

16 been on that show twice.

17 Q When was the most recent time you

18 have been on that show?

19 A Several years ago. Several years

20 ago. At least, at least four or five years ago.

21 Q Can you describe the type of show

22 Maria Elvira is, or was, four or five years ago?

23 A Used to be called different when I

24 used to go.

25 Q What was it called?

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1 A Maria Elvira Confronta.

2 Q Confronts.

3 A Confronts. I think that was -- she

4 has gone through several different formats. The

5 formats that I have been at her program have  
6 always been like a point/counterpoint. This is  
7 the theme: There are some people for it, there  
8 are some people against it.

9 Q Two times you appeared on Maria  
10 Elvira Confronta show, one you said was four or  
11 five years ago. When was the time before that?

12 A Probably a year before, something  
13 like that.

14 Q So fair to say five to six years  
15 ago?

16 A Yeah, maybe seven years or less.

17 Q Were both shows with the same theme?

18 A I'm trying to remember. The first  
19 time that I went to Maria Elvira, that I think it  
20 had to do with -- I'm sure it had to do with  
21 travel to Cuba, that I was for travel to Cuba.

22 There was one show that I went to  
23 Maria Elvira and it also had to do I think with --  
24 it was at the time that Gutierrez Menoyo had  
25 stayed in Cuba. Gutierrez Menoyo used to be the

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1 president of Cambio Cubano, an exile organization,  
2 so I think the thrust of the program was, did he

3 do right in staying, who is Gutierrez Menoyo. It  
4 was a point/counterpoint in that sense, and travel  
5 to Cuba.

6 Another was -- the other time I went  
7 to Maria Elvira was, I went with Jose Ignacio  
8 Rasco and it had to do with all these -- it's also  
9 about travel to Cuba. It's always been about  
10 engaging and traveling to Cuba. I don't remember  
11 the specifics, to tell you the truth. It's been a  
12 while.

13 Q You also appeared at the Oscar Haza  
14 show. How many times have you been on that show?

15 A One time that I can remember, just  
16 one time.

17 Q When was that?

18 A There had been a hurricane in Cuba  
19 and I want to think maybe four years ago and there  
20 were some organizations -- it was during President  
21 Bush's tenure, there was some organizations asking  
22 Whitehouse to put a moratorium on the travel  
23 restrictions so that Cuban-Americans could go to  
24 Cuba and take the aid directly to their relatives  
25 in Cuba.

1 Q Was your organization one of those  
2 organizations?

3 A Absolutely.

4 Q And that organization at the time  
5 would have been Puentes Cubanos?

6 A The Cuban-American Commission for  
7 Family Rights.

8 Q And the purpose of the show was  
9 to --

10 A It was to either support going to  
11 Cuba to help your family or keeping the status quo  
12 of, you don't go to Cuba even in the midst of this  
13 horrendous human crisis.

14 Q So it was also a point/counterpoint  
15 type discussion?

16 A It was a point/counterpoint type  
17 discussion.

18 Q You appeared, you indicated, on Dan  
19 Rather for a special for Cuba. When was that?

20 A About two years ago.

21 Q And what was the purpose of your  
22 being interviewed by Mr. Rather?

23 A Dan Rather did a special on his --  
24 whatever show he is on now, H --

25 Q HD Net?

1       A    HD Net. Right after Raul Castro  
2   basically took over as president or was in the  
3   transition of taking over as president. And it  
4   was a going back to his last time that he was in  
5   Cuba interviewing, seeing what the situation was  
6   on the ground in Cuba and what the different  
7   voices were vis a vis engage in Cuba or not engage  
8   in Cuba. And I was one of the voices that he  
9   elected to showcase advocating for engagement.  
10   And there were people, obviously, who were not for  
11   engagement, like Marco Rubio, who was also on that  
12   program, who was also the head of the --

13           MR. ROGOW: Speaker of the House.

14           THE WITNESS: Speaker of the House,  
15       and he was on the program, too.

16   BY MR. DORTA:

17       Q    You mentioned advocating for  
18   engagement and I have asked you on multiple  
19   occasions to make sure that I understand what you  
20   mean. Part of that would be doing away with the  
21   embargo. Part of that would be doing away with  
22   the restrictions on visiting Cuba.

23           Is there anything else I'm missing?

24           MR. ROGOW: Let me object to the  
25       form of the question, but you can answer

1 it.

2 THE WITNESS: When I talk about  
3 engagement, I talk specifically about  
4 travel. I feel very strongly that  
5 specifically Cuban-Americans should travel  
6 to the island and engage with the people  
7 of Cuba and obviously with their family.  
8 I also think that Americans have a right  
9 to travel. That is being denied. I am  
10 against the embargo on record. The  
11 embargo is a different issue and much more  
12 complex issue.

13 BY MR. DORTA:

14 Q Why is it more complex, in your  
15 opinion?

16 A Because it entails tremendous  
17 different situations, like property that has been  
18 confiscated, rapprochement between the two  
19 countries that is going to take -- it's a much  
20 longer, much longer thing that will come about.

21 Specifically engagement, I refer to  
22 that primarily through travel and contact, people  
23 to people. That is where I fall.

24 Q Have you been contacted from news  
25 whenever there is a, quote, necessary advocating

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1 engagement; has that ever happened?

2 A Some news media has contacted me to  
3 find out.

4 Q Without you looking for them, they  
5 have looked for you; is that fair to say?

6 A They have looked for me, yes.

7 Q You also appeared on Jim Lehrer.  
8 Can you tell me about that?

9 A Yes, I did.

10 Q When was that?

11 A That was right after Raul Castro was  
12 confirmed by the National Assembly of Cuba as  
13 president and Jim Lehrer wanted to have opinions  
14 from Cuban-Americans as to that particular  
15 situation.

16 Q With regards to those programs that  
17 you appeared to date; Maria Elvira, Oscar Haza,  
18 Dan Rather, Jim Lehrer, did you contact them or  
19 did they contact you?

20 A They contacted me.

21 Q All of them?

22       A   Those specific ones that you are  
23 talking about, Maria Elvira, Oscar Haza, Jim  
24 Lehrer and --  
25       Q   Dan Rather.

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1       A   Dan Rather, they contacted me.  
2       Q   Has there ever been a time where you  
3 have contacted them and said, "Hey, I got  
4 something to say," prior to October, 2008?  
5       A   I have sent press releases on things  
6 we were doing, et cetera, to the press. So if you  
7 assume that that is contacting the press,  
8 obviously it is contacting the press, but I had  
9 not contacted those people directly.  
10      Q   Specifically television: Have you  
11 contacted them and said, "Hey, I have something to  
12 say"?  
13      A   Not necessarily, no.  
14      Q   How often do you give a press  
15 release or have you done a press release?  
16      A   Oh, it's very sporadic. It's when  
17 the need calls for it. I don't have a set pattern  
18 on press releases.  
19      Q   You indicated that you have been on



20 various news spots. That's what it says in your  
21 Interrogatories regarding Univision, Telemundo,  
22 NBC, CBS. Can you tell me a little bit about  
23 that?

24 A Well, if I am organizing a  
25 conference and bringing somebody like Mikhail

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1 Gorbachev to the Biltmore, which I did, you can  
2 assume that there is going to be coverage and that  
3 I'm going to be asked to speak to the press as to  
4 why we are having that meeting.

5 Q Why did you have that meeting?

6 A Why did I have that meeting?  
7 Because we thought it was very important that  
8 somebody who is viewed by us as a champion of  
9 bringing down Communism could come to this  
10 community and basically tell us, specifically the  
11 Cuban-American community, that our strategy is  
12 completely flawed in terms of changing the current  
13 government. And that's exactly what Mr. Gorbachev  
14 did.

15 Q Fair to say you have been quoted in  
16 the past in the print media?

17 A Oh, yes.

18 Q Have you written any articles that  
19 have been published?

20 A I have sent letters to the editor  
21 that have been published.

22 Q What type of periodicals and/or  
23 newspapers?

24 A Article as such?

25 Q You sent letters to whom that have

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1 been published?

2 A Mainly to the Herald. To the Miami  
3 Herald, to the El Nuevo Herald.

4 Q Other than those two entities, have  
5 you sent them to any other entities that have been  
6 published, letters or articles?

7 A No.

8 Q Have you ever written an article?

9 A I have written -- no, not an  
10 article.

11 Q What have you written?

12 A What?

13 Q Have you written anything that's  
14 been published other than the letters to the  
15 Herald that you described?

16       A   Comments to the press. When I give  
17   a talk at a certain conference, it could be picked  
18   up and published through the Internet, if you  
19   consider that published.

20       Q   Okay. And you appeared on radio  
21   programs?

22       A   Yes, I have appeared on radio  
23   programs.

24       Q   How often?

25       A   Not very often.

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1       Q   In your lifetime, how many radio  
2   programs would you say you have been on?

3       A   Less than a dozen.

4       Q   The point of you reaching or  
5   participating in all these media outlets, would it  
6   be fair to say that it would be to engage in a  
7   dialogue or for engagement, as you said; is that  
8   the purpose of --

9       A   It is to continue the advocacy work,  
10   it's to educate.

11       Q   Have you had any communication or  
12   involvement with the current U.S. administration,  
13   the Obama administration?

14 A Do I have involvement with the Obama  
15 administration? No, I don't.

16 Q Have you been contacted by anyone in  
17 the administration with regards to opinions and/or  
18 help in shaping the policy?

19 A No, I haven't.

20 Q Do you know someone by the name of  
21 Carlos Alvarez?

22 A Yes, I do.

23 Q When did you first meet Mr. Alvarez?

24 A I probably met Carlos Alvarez in  
25 1962.

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1 Q When was that? I'm sorry, where was  
2 that?

3 A 1962.

4 Q Where that was?

5 A In Miami.

6 Q Where in Miami?

7 A Agrupacion Catolica University.

8 Q And that was the group you mentioned  
9 during --

10 A Right. He was very active.

11 Q Earlier in the deposition that was

12 the group that you mentioned whereby you were part  
13 of La Rosa?

14 A Right.

15 Q And that was the other group of  
16 professionals?

17 A Right.

18 Q And how old were you when you met  
19 Mr. Alvarez, or Dr. Alvarez. Is it doctor or  
20 mister?

21 A He is doctor.

22 Q He is a doctor, okay.

23 A He wasn't a doctor then. He was a  
24 teenager just like me. I must have been fifteen,  
25 sixteen.

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1 Q Who introduced you?

2 A The organizations. We just met  
3 through the organizations.

4 Q You had like a mixer?

5 A A mixer, and maybe if there was any  
6 kind of formal introduction, it would have been  
7 through Reverend Amado Llorente, who was the head  
8 of that organization. I think he still is,  
9 although he is very elderly now.

10 Q Are the two of you still friends

11 today, you and Dr. Alvarez?

12 A Dr. Alvarez is in jail.

13 Q Are you are still friends today?

14 A I would say we are not friends

15 today.

16 Q Why not?

17 A Dr. Alvarez put a stain on my

18 projects and Dr. Alvarez betrayed my friendship.

19 Q When was the last time you spoke to

20 Dr. Alvarez?

21 A The last time I spoke to Dr. Alvarez

22 was sometime in 2005 before his arraignment.

23 Q So you have not spoken to him since

24 the arraignment?

25 A I have not spoken to Carlos Alvarez

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1 since then.

2 Q Do you know what he was charged

3 with?

4 A He was charged with being an

5 unregistered Cuban agent.

6 Q Do you know what he pled to?

7 A I think he pled guilty.

8 Q You indicated that he put a stain on  
9 your projects. Can you be more specific as to  
10 what you mean by that?

11 A He had a relationship with the Cuban  
12 Government that we were not aware of. Therefore  
13 everybody that has participated in that program,  
14 project, including me, is absolutely horrified  
15 that this happened.

16 Q When you say this particular  
17 project, what project do you mean?

18 A The Cuban-American Professionals.

19 Q You indicated originally that you  
20 had not read his confession and it was  
21 subsequently amended that you have in fact read  
22 Dr. Alvarez's confession. Is it true that you  
23 have in fact read it?

24 A In fact I read it June 5.

25 Q Was June 5 the first time that you

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1 read that confession?

2 A Yes.

3 Q How many times have you read it?

4 A One time.

5 Q What did you think?

6 A What do I think about what?

7 Q His confession in general.

8 A I think it is pathetic. I think he

9 was pathetic. And it's very, very sad.

10 Q When you say pathetic, what do you

11 mean by that?

12 A He was a pathetic respondent to

13 everything. It was a lot of um-hmm and uh-uh and

14 didn't make sense half the time and obviously he

15 was a person in distress.

16 Q Do you believe he was coerced into

17 saying what he said?

18 MR. ROGOW: Object to the form.

19 THE WITNESS: I have no way of

20 judging that.

21 BY MR. DORTA:

22 Q Do you disagree with any portion of

23 the confession, generally?

24 MR. ROGOW: Object to the form.

25 THE WITNESS: I don't know. I don't

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1 have information to agree or disagree with

2 a lot of things that he said.

3 BY MR. DORTA:



4 Q Did it surprise you that Dr. Alvarez  
5 had admitted working for Cuban Intelligence?

6 A Sir, I was shocked.

7 Q He claims to have received a medal  
8 in the secret ceremony during the course of the  
9 confession. Did that surprise you?

10 A The whole thing surprised me.

11 Q You were talking about a stain in  
12 the project and specifically you were talking  
13 about the professionals programs that you went to  
14 Cuba on multiple occasions. How many of those  
15 occasions did Dr. Alvarez travel with you to Cuba  
16 during the course of those programs?

17 A Probably four times.

18 Q And you accompanied him, obviously,  
19 because you were there on all those trips, yes?

20 A I took all the exchanges with the  
21 exception of the first one.

22 Q He was part of the CCD as well,  
23 wasn't he?

24 A I believe he entered the CCD -- I  
25 don't know, '98, '99, something like that.

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1 Q Is it true that you invited him as a

2 guest when you sat on the Board?

3 A Sir, I did not invite him as a

4 guest.

5 Q So the answer is no, you did not?

6 A The answer is no.

7 Q Do you know how he became part of

8 the CCD?

9 A Alejandro Portes from Princeton

10 University, who was the president of the CCD at

11 the time, invited him to come to the Board as a

12 visitor and then asked him to join the Board.

13 Q When he was traveling with you to

14 Cuba with regards to the professionals' program,

15 where was he working?

16 A Where was he working?

17 Q Yes.

18 A I think he was a professor at FIU.

19 I also think he had some kind of a part time

20 practice of clinical psychology.

21 Q Do you know what he taught at FIU?

22 A I wrote it down. Something about --

23 had to be something about conflict resolution and

24 identity. That was his expertise.

25 Q What was the purpose of him

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1 traveling with this particular program? What did  
2 he have to offer, in your opinion?

3 A Dr. Alvarez was a well known  
4 professional in the field of conflict resolution.  
5 He had had considerable training in that field, he  
6 had participated in important workshops at Harvard  
7 University under Dr. Herbert Kelman, who has  
8 played at some time a role in trying to settle the  
9 Israeli/Middle Eastern conflict. Also I believe  
10 he had also worked through Kelman in Colombia with  
11 the problems in Colombia.

12 So he was an expert in the field.

13 Q What kind of person, in your  
14 opinion, prior to you reading his confession and  
15 finding out his being a Cuban agent, was Carlos  
16 Alvarez?

17 MR. ROGOW: Object to the form.

18 THE WITNESS: The Carlos Alvarez  
19 that I knew was a gentleman, a  
20 professional, a caring person that was --  
21 had a very high standard in this  
22 community.

23 BY MR. DORTA:

24 Q You met him when you were fifteen.  
25 Did you develop a relationship as friends

1 throughout your teenage and adult years?

2 A I met Carlos Alvarez in 1962. I got  
3 married in 1965 to my first husband. I never saw  
4 Carlos Alvarez again until probably 1997 or '98  
5 when I saw him at that Board meeting of the CCD  
6 where he came as a visitor. So start counting.  
7 Thirty-three, thirty-four years. I mean, thirty  
8 plus years up, not seeing Carlos Alvarez.

9 Q At that point when you see him at  
10 the Board, do you immediately recognize him as  
11 someone you met back thirty-two years ago?

12 A No, I did not immediately recognize  
13 him.

14 Q When does that hit you, that this is  
15 the same person that you met back in the day?

16 A When it hit him that I was the same  
17 person he had met in 1962. He had gained probably  
18 fifty pounds. He was unrecognizable.

19 Q What was your maiden name? I never  
20 asked you that.

21 A Silvia Hernandez Teurbe Tolon.

22 Q Okay, I may have asked you that.

23 A You did ask me that.

24 Q I thought I did, now that you said

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1 A It's all right, you can forget.

2 Q So Dr. Alvarez -- did you develop a  
3 friendship at that point when you meet at CCD?

4 A We were so happy to reacquaint each  
5 other. We were delighted to find each other after  
6 so many years of not seeing each other because,  
7 like I said, he was a nice guy.

8 Q Did you become friends, fair to say?

9 A We didn't socialize together. We  
10 had not much in common.

11 Q So there was no going out to dinner  
12 or going to parties?

13 A No, not at all. I have been with  
14 him socially with, he and his wife, my husband and  
15 I, socially that I can remember probably once or  
16 twice. He's not in my social group of friends.

17 Q Did Puentes Cubanos ever hire  
18 Dr. Alvarez?

19 A Yes, we did.

20 Q What position did you hire him for?

21 A Facilitator.

22 Q What does that mean?

23       A    A person who facilitates a dialogue  
24 in opposing -- well, opposing camps. Facilitates  
25 a dialogue.

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1       Q    How many facilitators did Puentes  
2 Cubanans have since your time as executive  
3 director?

4       A    On the Cuban-American Professional,  
5 only one, Carlos Alvarez.

6       Q    And you had a facilitator per  
7 program?

8       A    He was the only one for all the  
9 programs.

10      Q    For all the programs?

11      A    For the programs of the  
12 Cuban-American Professional Exchange.

13      Q    My question is, did you have  
14 facilitators then that were hired for other  
15 programs other than Carlos Alvarez?

16      A    We did not need facilitators for  
17 other programs.

18      Q    So Dr. Alvarez was then hired as  
19 facilitator and he was the only facilitator that  
20 you had at Puentes Cubanans; is that fair to say?

21 A For that particular job, yes.

22 Q Were there any facilitators at

23 Puentes Cubanos?

24 A No.

25 Q And the role of the facilitator was

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1 basically to establish dialogue, you said?

2 A The role of two facilitators; we had  
3 a facilitator representing the Cuban-American  
4 Professionals who were traveling to Cuba; the  
5 University of Havana had a facilitator  
6 representing the Cuban Nationals who were going to  
7 be having this dialogue.

8 Q And who was the facilitator for the  
9 Cuban --

10 A Miriam Rodriguez.

11 Q Let me finish my question just so  
12 it's clear. Who was the facilitator for the Cuban  
13 Government?

14 A Miriam Rodriguez.

15 Q This is the same Ms. Rodriguez  
16 that you indicated was your counterpart?

17 A May I say something as to what you  
18 have just said? Who was the facilitator for the

19 University of Havana? Miriam Rodriguez.

20 Q You testified earlier that your  
21 counterpart on this particular program was Miriam  
22 Rodriguez.

23 A Miriam Rodriguez was the point  
24 person of the project in Cuba.

25 Q Got you. And Dr. Alvarez was hired

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1 to be able to deal with them directly for what  
2 benefit to Puentes?

3 A To facilitate the discussion.

4 Q You were not able to do that  
5 yourself?

6 A I do not have the training to do  
7 that myself.

8 Q And he had the training as the  
9 ultimate dispute resolutionist?

10 A Yes, absolutely. It took somebody  
11 who was an expert in conflict resolution  
12 techniques and how a dialogue with two opposing  
13 sides can take you --

14 Q Whose idea was it -- I'm sorry, did  
15 you finish your answer?

16 A I finished.



17 Q Whose idea was it to hire  
18 Dr. Alvarez for Puentes?  
19 A What I understand is that my  
20 assistant, Hannah Ellinson, who we have discussed  
21 before, when she presented this project to the  
22 Cuban Interest Section, they obviously said there  
23 has got to be -- who is going to be facilitating  
24 the discussion. They recommended that it was done  
25 through the University of Havana, Center for the

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1 Study of Alternative Politics, it was called at  
2 the time. CEAP. The head of the CEAP was Miriam  
3 Rodriguez. My assistant asked Miriam who would  
4 she recommend as her counterpart on the U.S. side  
5 and she recommended Carlos Alvarez, who she had  
6 known for many years and had even at one point  
7 with Dr. Kelman from Harvard participated in this  
8 type of conflict resolution training in Cuba, so  
9 she knew of him.

10 Q And then at that point when your  
11 assistant tells you, you know who this is and you  
12 say it's a good idea?

13 A Of course. Somebody that I knew and  
14 that I knew had the expertise.

15 Q Did you have to present this  
16 discussion to the Board? Was this a decision that  
17 you could make as executive director of Puentes  
18 Cubanos?

19 A It was presented to the Board.

20 Q The Board would then hear his  
21 qualifications and make a determination?

22 A He had to present a biography and I  
23 believe he even talked to the Board at one time  
24 and the Board unanimously agreed that he had the  
25 credentials to do the conflict resolution.

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1 Q Had the Board said no, would you  
2 still have been in a position to hire Dr. Alvarez  
3 if you wished as executive director?

4 MR. ROGOW: Object to the form.

5 THE WITNESS: If the Board had said  
6 no, Carlos Alvarez would not have been  
7 hired.

8 BY MR. DORTA:

9 Q So you don't have the unilateral  
10 decision to be able to hire someone as executive  
11 director without Board approval?

12 A I certainly would not have had that

13 option in such an important project.

14 Q Was this a paying position for

15 Dr. Alvarez?

16 A He received a stipend.

17 Q What was the stipend?

18 A I think it started at \$1000 per trip

19 and maybe went up to \$1,500 per trip as a stipend

20 for the week.

21 Q He never drew a salary?

22 A No, of course not.

23 Q The four occasions you went to Cuba

24 with Dr. Alvarez, referring to your Responses to

25 Interrogatories, which are consistent with your

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1 testimony here in the deposition, which were the

2 ones that went with Dr. Alvarez for the Young

3 Professional Exchange?

4 I'll be more than happy to show it

5 to you so it's not testing your memory.

6 A Yes, please.

7 Those right there that are marked.

8 Q You marked, you actually marked on

9 the exhibit with check marks May, 2000; April of

10 2001; November, 2001 and April, 2002?

11       A    The first trip in 1999 was not  
12 through Puentes Cubanos, it was through the Center  
13 for International Policy in Washington, New York.

14       Q    Was he part of that trip as well?

15       A    Center for International Policy in  
16 Washington, New York. He accompanied the trip.

17       Q    So that would have been a fifth trip  
18 that he went with you as well?

19       A    I did not go on the trip.

20       Q    I'm sorry?

21       A    Hannah Ellinson went on the trip.

22       Q    I apologize. 1999.

23           Who is Mercedes Arce?

24       A    Who is Mercedes Arce?

25       Q    Yes, ma'am.

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1       A    Mercedes Arce is currently a  
2 professor at a university in Mexico City. She is  
3 a professor at the University in Distrito Federal,  
4 which is Mexico City.

5       Q    When did she, if you know, go to  
6 Mexico City?

7       A    Oh, my goodness. Maybe three, four  
8 years ago. I don't know. I cannot give you a

9 date. I don't know.

10 Q How do you know Mercedes Arce?

11 A I met Mercedes Arce in Cuba during  
12 one of my Young Professional Exchange trips.

13 Q Which one?

14 A I don't remember if it was the first  
15 or the second or the third. I don't remember.

16 Q The Young Professional started in  
17 April of 2001.

18 A It was much later. It was either  
19 '02 or -- probably '02. I don't know. I don't  
20 remember exactly. The only reason I remember that  
21 I met her is because Carlos Alvarez invited me to  
22 have lunch with her, her husband and her child,  
23 her daughter. So I had lunch at El Aljibe. And I  
24 joined them for lunch and then they dropped me off  
25 at my hotel. At that time I don't remember

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1 exactly which one it was. I know which one it is

2 but I just can't tell you the name.

3 Q You can see it?

4 A I can see it but I can't tell you  
5 name. The Victoria.

6 Q Victoria?

7       A    Victoria. So I met her at that  
8 luncheon for the first time.

9       Q    And since that luncheon, did you  
10 have subsequent contact with her upon your  
11 subsequent trips to Cuba?

12       A    That I recall, I met Mercedes Arce  
13 one more time in Cuba and that was when I was  
14 planning the Entre Nosotras project.

15       Q    The first time you went, not the  
16 second time that you went to confront the Cuban  
17 officials?

18       A    Oh, yeah, before that. When I was  
19 planning the project.

20       Q    Other than that, did you have any  
21 other prior contact with Mercedes Arce?

22       A    No.

23       Q    When did you find out she left Cuba  
24 and was now working in Mexico City?

25       A    I can't give you an exact date. I

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1 found out through some friends of hers here in  
2 Miami, who basically told me she was now in  
3 Mexico. But I can't tell you the time or the even  
4 the person that told me. I would have to --

5 Q Do you know how she ended up in  
6 Mexico City, the circumstances?

7 A I don't know the exact circumstances  
8 except to say that from what I hear, she was very  
9 unhappy in Cuba.

10 Q Okay. Do you know what she did when  
11 she was in Cuba, what her position was?

12 A From the time that I have even heard  
13 that she existed, she was at one point the  
14 director of the CEAP, at the university. She then  
15 went to work for -- representing a Norwegian  
16 company in Cuba and after that I believe is when  
17 she left for Mexico.

18 Q Do you know if she worked for the  
19 Cuban Government?

20 A Sir, I would imagine most people in  
21 Cuba work for the Cuban Government and most people  
22 at the university could very well work for the  
23 Cuban Government.

24 No, I did not know that she worked  
25 for the Cuban Government as an officer.

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1 Q Do you know whether or not she  
2 worked for Cuban Intelligence?

3       A    I have no information whatsoever  
4   about that.

5       Q    After reading Dr. Alvarez's  
6   statement, do you know someone by the name of  
7   Jesus Arboleya?

8       A    No, I don't know Mr. Arboleya.

9       Q    Have you ever heard of Sr. Arboleya  
10   other than the statement that you read?

11      A    I have heard of Jesus Arboleya.

12      Q    How have you heard of Jesus  
13   Arboleya?

14      A    From people in Miami who know Jesus  
15   Arboleya.

16      Q    You testified that you know Amado  
17   Soto. When did you first meet Mr. Soto?

18      A    I first met Mr. Soto, that trip that  
19   I told you was family and also some of the people  
20   from the CCD were there.

21      Q    The 1999 trip?

22      A    Yes, and my granddaughter was born.

23      Q    I'm sorry, that was the '96 trip  
24   then?

25      A    '96. She is twelve years old.

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1 Q Where does Mr. Soto live?

2 A In Cuba.

3 Q Where, what province?

4 A In Havana, I imagine.

5 Q Have you ever been to Mr. Soto's

6 home?

7 A No.

8 Q Have you ever met with Mr. Soto

9 anywhere other than in Cuba?

10 A Never.

11 Q Have you ever met with Mr. Soto

12 alone?

13 A Yes.

14 Q How many times?

15 A I can't quantify. Several.

16 Q More than once?

17 A More than once.

18 Q More than five times?

19 A More than five.

20 Q More than ten times?

21 A I can't quantify after that.

22 Q What does Mr. Soto do?

23 A The Mr. Soto that I met was

24 presented to me as the ideologue of the Communist

25 Party.

1 Q What does that mean?

2 A That's a good question. I guess he  
3 is the person that, especially when dealing with  
4 Cuban-Americans, Cubans living abroad, has to make  
5 sure that whatever projects we have are kept  
6 ideologically -- we are not there to cause  
7 subversion of any type, that it is kept within  
8 something that they will accept or not accept. He  
9 is one of the persons that when you are doing a  
10 project, you are trying to do a project, is part  
11 of the people we meet with, among others.

12 Q Would you characterize yourself as  
13 being friends with Mr. Soto?

14 A No, I would not characterize myself  
15 as being friends with Mr. Soto. Somebody that I  
16 know.

17 Q Do you know Mr. Soto's cell phone  
18 number, for instance, email address?

19 A I have his email address.

20 Q Do you have his phone number?

21 A I don't have his phone number. I  
22 remember one time in Cuba somebody giving me his  
23 number, somebody had his cell number and they put  
24 him on the phone with me. I do not have his cell  
25 number.

1 Q Okay. Fair to say Mr. Soto is there

2 to make sure you behave yourself?

3 MR. ROGOW: Object to the form.

4 BY MR. DORTA:

5 Q Do you understand my question?

6 A I don't know what -- I don't know

7 that I can answer that question, to behave

8 ourselves.

9 Q I'll rephrase it. You indicated he

10 was there to make sure there was no subversive

11 action taken, so he was there to supervise what is

12 going on, to see; is that right?

13 A He is one of the persons that has to

14 be part of the approval or disapproval of specific

15 projects --

16 Q So --

17 A -- that take place in Cuba.

18 Q So basically his job is to give a

19 project the green light or not?

20 A One of the persons of this

21 consensus.

22 Q Did Amado Soto ever get to

23 participate in the actual program, like be present

24 as the program is going on?

25 A Never, never.

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1 Q Was he was basically more of behind  
2 the scenes?

3 MR. ROGOW: Object to the form.

4 BY MR. DORTA:

5 Q Do you understand what I mean when I  
6 say that?

7 A I never considered Amado Soto to be  
8 behind the scenes of my project.

9 Q In your opinion, how was it that he  
10 would make sure that you weren't doing any  
11 subversive action or inciting any sort of --

12 MR. ROGOW: Object to the form.

13 THE WITNESS: I have no idea. You  
14 would have to ask him.

15 BY MR. DORTA:

16 Q So you don't know?

17 A I don't know.

18 Q Okay.

19 A You would have to ask Mr. Soto how  
20 he knew I wasn't doing subversive action.

21 Q Do you know if Mr. Soto knew

22 Mr. Alvarez?

23 A What was the question? I'm sorry.

24 Q Do you know if Mr. Soto knew

25 Dr. Alvarez?

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1 A Yes.

2 Q How do you know this?

3 A Because Dr. Alvarez told me he knew

4 Mr. Soto.

5 Q In what context?

6 A That he had met him in New York

7 many, many years ago when Mr. Soto apparently was

8 in New York.

9 Q Do you recall on one of your trips

10 to Cuba having a meeting with Amado Soto that he

11 didn't show up to and you finding out that he had

12 had hernia surgery?

13 A Absolutely I do recall that.

14 Q Can you tell me about that

15 particular trip?

16 A He was supposed to come and meet

17 with me at the Hotel Nacional and I wanted and

18 waited and waited. Never showed up and I

19 contacted -- I did have his home number, I

20 contacted his home number to find out what had  
21 happened and I was told that apparently he was in  
22 the hospital, apparently he was having some kind  
23 of illness.

24 Q What was the purpose of the meeting  
25 you were going to have at Hotel Nacional with

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1 Amado Soto?

2 A Continuing the projects that we were  
3 involved in: Continuing the Cuban-American  
4 Professional program, continuing the Health  
5 Program, trying to get the Entre Nosotras project,  
6 which never amounted to anything. All kinds of  
7 projects.

8 Q Was anyone present during the course  
9 of that meeting?

10 A No.

11 Q Was Dr. Alvarez there with regards  
12 to meeting Mr. Soto in the same room?

13 A No.

14 Q Did you speak to him on the phone  
15 while he was at the hospital?

16 A No, I did not speak to him on the  
17 phone when he was in the hospital.

18 Q And specifically, so you know what,  
19 I'm talking about Amado Soto when he had his  
20 hernia.

21 A I don't know what he had. Hernia or  
22 whatever.

23 Q I apologize. You said you contacted  
24 the home number and you spoke to someone and you  
25 found out he was in the hospital.

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1 A No, I found out he was in the  
2 hospital the day after from Miriam Rodriguez,  
3 okay. I did not know that he was in the hospital  
4 until the day after. He never showed up. I  
5 contacted the house. Whoever answered did not  
6 know where he was and I found it very strange that  
7 he couldn't -- he wouldn't come to an appointment  
8 and at least call and say I'm stuck in traffic or  
9 whatever. So I found out through Miriam, I'm  
10 pretty sure, that he was ill.

11 Q Did you see him or go speak to him  
12 while he was recuperating?

13 A No.

14 Q Do you know what the term handler  
15 means in counter intelligence?

16 A No, I don't.

17 Q Do you know if Dr. Alvarez's

18 confession indicates that Amado Soto was his

19 handler between 1984 and 1995? Did you read that

20 portion?

21 A I read that.

22 Q Do you know what that means?

23 A Maybe the person that was giving him

24 orders that he had to comply with.

25 Q Was Amado Soto ever a donor to

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1 Puentes Cubanos?

2 A Never.

3 Q Was Amado Soto ever a sponsor to

4 Puentes Cubanos?

5 A No.

6 Q Would it surprise you to know that

7 Dr. Alvarez claimed that Soto was a Puentes

8 Cubanos sponsor?

9 A Those are Carlos Alvarez's words,

10 not mine.

11 Q Dr. Alvarez's words are obviously a

12 lie?

13 A You would have to ask Mr. Alvarez.



14 Q I'm asking you.

15 MR. ROGOW: Object to the form, but  
16 you can answer.

17 THE WITNESS: The sponsors of the  
18 projects of Puentes Cubanos were the  
19 foundations that gave us the money to do  
20 the projects. There were no other  
21 sponsors of Puentes Cubanos. There were  
22 entities that had to approve or disapprove  
23 our projects. I never considered them  
24 sponsors to my project.

25

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1 BY MR. DORTA:

2 Q So Soto is one of these individuals  
3 that had to approve the interactions between Cuba  
4 and Puentes Cubanos?

5 A I am fairly certain that he was.  
6 And you know what, I think I'm going to have to  
7 take a break.

8 (Thereupon, a brief recess was  
9 taken, after which the following  
10 proceedings were had:)

11 BY MR. DORTA:

12 Q You testified that you met with  
13 Amado Soto in private. Did you meet with him in  
14 private on five occasions, more or less?

15 A I can't quantify the numbers. I  
16 don't remember.

17 Q You testified that you stayed in  
18 Hotel Nacional. How many occasions have you  
19 stayed in Hotel Nacional?

20 A Several.

21 Q How many?

22 A More than five, less than ten.

23 Q What floor in Hotel Nacional do you  
24 normally stay at?

25 A I could stay on the seventh floor, I

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1 could stay on the sixth floor. I can assure you,

2 I will stay where the microphones are on.

3 Q You will stay where the microphones  
4 are on?

5 A I am sure we are being taped.

6 Q How do you know this?

7 A Because it is public knowledge.

8 Q What is public knowledge?

9 A Everybody knows that in Cuba.

10 Q That in Cuba what, I'm sorry?

11 A Things are taped. I'm sure if I

12 carry an American passport I am taped.

13 Q When you say you are taped, all your

14 conversations, whether they are on the telephone,

15 they are taped?

16 A I assume that.

17 Q Do you have any independent

18 confirmation you are being taped?

19 A No, I don't have any confirmation of

20 that. It is an assumption.

21 Q So you stayed in the sixth floor and

22 the seventh floor. Any other floors in the

23 Nacional you stayed at?

24 A Oh, I don't remember. The first

25 time I went to the Nacional was in 1999 and I have

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1 no idea what floor I stayed at.

2 Q Do you know why Carlos Alvarez would

3 say you are very connected to the Cuban

4 Government?

5 A Excuse me?

6 Q Do you know why Carlos Alvarez would

7 say you are very connected to the Cuban

8 Government?

9 MR. ROGOW: Object to the form.

10 MR. DORTA: What's wrong with the  
11 form?

12 MR. ROGOW: You can answer. I'm  
13 objecting to the form.

14 MR. DORTA: What's wrong with the  
15 form?

16 THE WITNESS: He is asking --

17 MR. ROGOW: Does she know why Carlos  
18 Alvarez said something?

19 MR. DORTA: I asking, does she know  
20 why Carlos Alvarez said it.

21 MR. ROGOW: How could she know why  
22 Carlos Alvarez said it?

23 MR. DORTA: She may have spoken to  
24 him.

25 MR. ROGOW: Well, you didn't ask

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1 that question. You asked, does she know  
2 what Carlos Alvarez was thinking when he  
3 said something, so I'm objecting to the  
4 form.

5 BY MR. DORTA:

6 Q Do you know why Carlos Alvarez would  
7 say that you are very connected to the Cuban  
8 Government?

9 MR. ROGOW: And I objected to the  
10 form. But you can certainly answer.

11 THE WITNESS: Maybe because I have  
12 met with some government officials. I  
13 have no idea. You would have to ask  
14 Mr. Alvarez.

15 BY MR. DORTA:

16 Q Are you connected to the Cuban  
17 Government?

18 A I know some members of the Cuban  
19 Government.

20 Q We have already discussed who you  
21 know, correct?

22 A I have already written down who I  
23 know.

24 Q Do you work for Cuban Intelligence?

25 A Absolutely not.

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1 MR. ROGOW: I didn't hear that  
2 question.

3 THE WITNESS: Do you work for Cuban

4 Intelligence.

5 BY MR. DORTA:

6 Q Are you a Cuban operative?

7 A Absolutely not.

8 Q According to Carlos Alvarez,

9 Mercedes Arce, Amado Soto are Cuban operatives.

10 Do you have an opinion with regards to that?

11 MR. ROGOW: Object to the form.

12 THE WITNESS: I have never been to

13 Cuba where I have been told of anybody

14 being a Cuban operative. I assume that

15 anybody could be a Cuban operative. I

16 have never been told.

17 BY MR. DORTA:

18 Q Okay.

19 A That he or her are Cuban operatives.

20 Q Do you know Lourdes Casal?

21 A No.

22 Q Do you know someone named Virgiolio

23 Lora?

24 A No.

25 Q Do you know Jose Luis Mendez?

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1 A No.

2 Q Do you know Rafael de la Guardia?

3 A No.

4 Q Do you know Manuel Pineda?

5 A No. I have already answered all

6 that.

7 Q Actually these are Requests for

8 Admissions.

9 A Okay.

10 Q Do you know Neyda Rodriguez?

11 A Neyda Rodriguez?

12 Q Yes.

13 A No.

14 Q Neyda Rojas?

15 A No.

16 Q Do you know Miriam Rodriguez?

17 A Yes.

18 Q Are you friends with Miriam

19 Rodriguez?

20 A I am friends with Miriam Rodriguez.

21 Q How long have you been friends with

22 her?

23 A I met Miriam when we started the

24 Cuban Professional Exchange.

25 Q That would have been sometime in

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1 nineteen --

2 A 2000.

3 Q 2000?

4 A 1999, 2000.

5 Q Where does she live?

6 A She lives in Cuba.

7 Q What province?

8 A I believe Havana.

9 Q Have you ever been to her home?

10 A No.

11 Q Have you ever had meetings alone  
12 with Ms. Rodriguez?

13 A I have been with Ms. Rodriguez  
14 alone, yes.

15 Q How many occasions?

16 A I don't have a number to give you.

17 Q You testified earlier that  
18 Ms. Rodriguez is a psychiatrist?

19 A She is a psychologist.

20 Q Psychologist. Does she have a  
21 position at the University of Havana?

22 A At present she has a position, I  
23 believe, in the rectory.

24 Q In the what?

25 A La rectoria. In the office of the



1 president. Is that a rector? I guess president.

2 I don't exactly know what her position is at

3 present.

4 Q When you met Ms. Rodriguez back in

5 2000, what position did she have?

6 A She was the head of the Center for

7 Alternative Policy, or Politics, of the University

8 of Havana, the CEAP.

9 Q She ever donated any money to any of

10 the organizations that you have been executive

11 director of?

12 A No.

13 Q Do you know if Carlos Alvarez knows

14 Ms. Rodriguez?

15 A Yes.

16 Q How do you know that?

17 A They were both facilitators of the

18 Puentes Cubanos projects.

19 Q The counterpoints?

20 A Exactly.

21 Q Did Dr. Alvarez ever email you about

22 presenting her work regarding the support for

23 dialogue or outreach between the U.S. and Cuba?

24 A Excuse me?

25 Q Did Dr. Alvarez ever email you about

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1 presenting her work regarding support for dialogue

2 or outreach between the U.S. and Cuba?

3 A Did you say presenting a work or her

4 work? Whose work?

5 Q Presenting her work, Rodriguez?

6 MR. ROGOW: Object to the form.

7 I think what he is asking you, did

8 Alvarez ever email you about presenting

9 Miriam Rodriguez's work.

10 BY MR. DORTA:

11 Q Correct.

12 A No.

13 Q Thank you.

14 MR. ROGOW: De nada.

15 BY MR. DORTA:

16 Q Do you know why Dr. Alvarez would

17 indicate that Ms. Rodriguez was a Cuban scholar

18 with ties to the Cuban Intelligence?

19 MR. ROGOW: Object to the form.

20 THE WITNESS: No, I don't know.

21 BY MR. DORTA:

22 Q Do you know whether or not Ms.

23 Rodriguez is part of Cuban Intelligence?  
24 A I have already told you that I do  
25 not have that information, have never been privy

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1 to that information from anybody in Cuba.

2 Q Do you know Angela Casana?

3 A I certainly do.

4 Q How do you know her?

5 A She was also a facilitator in the  
6 project.

7 Q Facilitator in what project?

8 A I'm sorry, the Cuban-American  
9 Professional projects.

10 Q Facilitator on which side?

11 A On the Cuban side.

12 Q Are you friends with Ms. Casana?

13 A I am friends with Ms. Casana.

14 Q How long have you known her?

15 A Since probably 2000 or 2001.

16 Q How did you meet her?

17 A During the project of the  
18 Cuban-American Professionals.

19 Q Before or after your arrival? In  
20 other words, had you met her on the phone,

21 telephonically, before you arrived on the island?

22 A I never met her until I arrived on  
23 the island.

24 Q Do you know where she lives?

25 A She lives in Cuba, but she is

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1 spending the majority of her time in the Dominican  
2 Republic. She has a brother who is very, very  
3 sick.

4 Q At the time back in 2000, 2001 when  
5 you met her, where in Cuba did she live?

6 A In Havana.

7 Q Did you ever visit her at her home?

8 A Yes.

9 Q How many occasions?

10 A Once.

11 Q What was the purpose of that visit?

12 A A mutual friend of ours was dating  
13 and she invited some friends over for tamal en  
14 casuela; it's a Cuban dish, so we could meet our  
15 mutual friend's fiance.

16 Q Who was the mutual friend?

17 A Marta Nunez. Doctora Marta Nunez.

18 Q Who else was present during the

19 course of that gathering?

20 A Well, Marta Nunez and her fiance,

21 Angela Casana and her husband.

22 Q What is her husband's name?

23 A Oh, I don't remember.

24 Q Okay.

25 A They are divorced. I don't

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1 remember.

2 Q Who else?

3 A Carlos Alvarez, myself, and there

4 was another couple who were also psychologists in

5 Cuba and I don't remember their names.

6 Q Did Ms. Casana, has she ever donated

7 money to Puentes Cubanos?

8 A No.

9 Q Any of the other organizations that

10 you were executive director to?

11 A No, that I know of.

12 Q Do you know Lisandro Perez?

13 A Yes, I do.

14 Q How do you know him?

15 A Through his position at Florida

16 International University. He is well known in the

17 community, the Cuban Research Institute, and also  
18 the fact that his daughter-in-law is my  
19 Goddaughter.

20 Q What is the daughter-in-law's name?

21 A Excuse me?

22 Q What is the daughter-in-law's name,  
23 your Goddaughter?

24 A Cynthia Barrera.

25 Q Do you know what his position is at

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1 F.I.U.?

2 A His position at FIU is a tenured  
3 professor of sociology.

4 Q How long have you known Dr. Perez?

5 A Probably since the late 90's.

6 Q Has he ever traveled to Cuba with  
7 you?

8 A No, I have never traveled to Cuba  
9 with him.

10 Q Has he ever traveled to Cuba through  
11 Puentes Cubanos?

12 A No, he has never traveled to Cuba  
13 through Puentes Cubanos.

14 Q Is he a sponsor or a donor of

15 Puentes Cubanos?

16 A No, he is not.

17 Q Does he sit or hold any position at

18 Puentes Cubanos?

19 A No, he doesn't.

20 Q Who is Alberto Coll?

21 A He is a professor of law at Depaul

22 University in Chicago.

23 Q Do you know Mr. Coll?

24 A Yes, I do.

25 Q How long have you known him?

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1 A Maybe seven or eight years.

2 Q When did you first meet Mr. Coll?

3 A I first met Alberto Coll at a Cuban  
4 conference in Washington, D.C. seven or eight  
5 years ago.

6 Q You mentioned he was a professor of  
7 law. Has he ever traveled to Cuba with you?

8 A No, he has never traveled to Cuba  
9 with me.

10 Q Do you know whether he has ever  
11 traveled to Cuba, as far as you know?

12 A Excuse me?

13 Q As far as you know, do you believe

14 he has traveled to Cuba?

15 A Oh, I believe he has traveled to

16 Cuba.

17 Q Did Dr. Alvarez introduce you to

18 Mr. Coll?

19 A What was the question?

20 Q Did Dr. Alvarez, Carlos Alvarez,

21 introduce you to Mr. Coll?

22 A No.

23 Q Who introduced you to Mr. Coll, if

24 you remember?

25 A I introduced myself to Mr. Coll, to

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1 Dr. Coll, at the conference that I just mentioned.

2 Q Are you aware that Dr. Coll pled

3 guilty to an offense?

4 A I am aware that he pled guilty to an

5 offense.

6 Q How did you become aware of that?

7 A It was public knowledge.

8 Q Did you speak to him afterwards?

9 A I certainly did.

10 Q What, if anything, did you discuss?



11 A How sorry I was and that it would  
12 put an end to his dilemma.

13 Q What were the circumstances with  
14 regards to Mr. Coll's arrest?

15 A Mr. Coll was arrested?

16 Q Or his -- his plea.

17 A Mr. Coll was found guilty of  
18 falsifying a travel application to Cuba. That was  
19 what Mr. Coll was found guilty of.

20 Q Did he tell you what it was that he  
21 did, if anything?

22 A Yes, he told me what he did. He  
23 went to see a girlfriend instead of seeing an  
24 aunt, as he stated on the application.

25 Q Did you know his late daughter?

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1 A Unfortunately I never met his late  
2 daughter.

3 Q Do you know what the circumstances  
4 of his plea and his conviction were?

5 A No, I don't, I don't.

6 Q When was the last time you spoke to  
7 him?

8 A The last time I spoke to Mr. Coll

9 was probably after October 8 when he, along with  
10 hundreds of people, called me to show support.

11 Q Hundreds of people called you?

12 A Oh, I think so, from all over.

13 Q The people that contacted you, what  
14 did they say, the hundreds of people that called  
15 you?

16 A How sorry they were.

17 Q For what?

18 A That I was in this position of being  
19 defamed.

20 Q How did they become aware of the  
21 fact that you had allegedly been defamed?

22 A Through the press. They read the  
23 Nuevo Herald, they see it on the press. They  
24 watch the TV program. It goes to the Internet.  
25 Washington knows about it. It is -- we live in a

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1 very interconnected --

2 Q These individuals that contacted you  
3 to show their support, these hundreds of people  
4 that you say contacted you, do you know whether or  
5 not they actually saw the show?

6 A Some of them saw the show, some of

7 them did not see the show.

8 Q After the show, did you ever issue a  
9 statement?

10 A Yes, I did.

11 Q And you filed suit with regards  
12 to this case?

13 A I certainly did.

14 Q Fair to say that you filing suit  
15 also aired a lot of publicity?

16 A Maybe, for those who were following  
17 it, yes, maybe.

18 Q Hundreds of people that you are  
19 aware of, do you have names or lists of them?

20 A I am a member of an organization,  
21 among the many organizations that I have written  
22 down, called ENCASA, the Emergency Network of  
23 Cuban American Scholars and Artists. It has over  
24 four hundred members and as the organization they  
25 issued a statement of support.

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1 That is not to mention the people  
2 from Washington, from the different NGO's, even  
3 from Congress, that contacted me along with people  
4 in Miami. So just from that organization you can

5 surmise over four hundred people were showing  
6 support.

7 Q When did they show the support?

8 A Right after the program aired,  
9 within the week or two weeks.

10 Q The very next day?

11 A Oh, I don't know. I don't think  
12 it was the next day. Took a few days.

13 Q Have you ever been involved with the  
14 Cuban Research Institute?

15 A Only to attend their conferences.

16 And we once had a meeting of --  
17 sponsored by Puentes Cubanos where we used the  
18 north campus of FIU, I forget what the north  
19 campus' name is, but used one of the meeting  
20 spaces at the north campus.

21 Q How many occasions have you been  
22 involved in the Cuban Research Institute?

23 A Doing what?

24 Q You indicated that you attended  
25 conferences.

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1 A I have gone to maybe three or four  
2 of their conferences. I have been to different

3 presentations that they give when they have  
4 special scholars that come to Miami and I'm  
5 invited along with other members to come to a  
6 luncheon. Like I said, we went to this F.I.U.  
7 locale because we needed some space.

8 Q When was the first time you were  
9 involved or you were invited to attend these  
10 conferences?

11 A Shortly after I came back to Miami  
12 from living in Washington. Probably '97, '98, I  
13 started going to the conferences.

14 Q When was the last conference you  
15 attended?

16 A Whenever they had the last one.  
17 Maybe a year and a half ago. I don't remember  
18 exactly when the last one was. I went for part of  
19 the day.

20 Q Do you know someone by the name of  
21 Milagros Martinez?

22 A Yes, I do.

23 Q How do you know her?

24 A When I became the executive director  
25 of the CCD, Milagros Martinez was the director of

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1 the CEAP, which we have talked several times. She  
2 had taken Mercedes Arce's position, so I met her  
3 with the president of the CCD at the time.

4 Q That was the first time you met her?

5 A That was the first time I met her.

6 Q Approximately what year was that?

7 A It must have been, oh, my goodness,  
8 '97, maybe.

9 Q Do you know if Dr. Alvarez knew  
10 Ms. Rodriguez -- Ms. Martinez, I'm sorry.

11 A Yes, I do.

12 Q How do you know that?

13 A Because I have seen them together in  
14 Cuba.

15 Q What does Milagros Martinez do for a  
16 living, if you know?

17 A Milagros Martinez is an academic.  
18 She worked at the University of Havana in the  
19 office of the rector, the president.

20 Q When you say an academic, is she a  
21 professor?

22 A She is a professor.

23 Q She participated in some of your  
24 programs?

25 A No, she didn't.

1       Q   What was the purpose of you coming  
2   in contact with Ms. Martinez?

3       A   Well, I met her with the CCD because  
4   she was the head of the CEAP, the Center for the  
5   Study of Alternative Politics, and an organization  
6   like the CCD interacted with the Center of the  
7   University of Havana. A lot of academics had  
8   conferences together, et cetera, et cetera. So  
9   that is when I met her. I saw her sporadically in  
10  Cuba from then on.

11      Q   Did you ever visit her at her home?

12      A   No.

13      Q   Did you ever have meetings with her  
14  in private?

15      A   Not that I recall.

16      Q   Did you ever have lunches or dinners  
17  with her?

18      A   With other members, yeah, with other  
19  Cuban-Americans or Cubans.

20      Q   Ever you, her and Carlos Alvarez  
21  have a meal together, just the three of you?

22      A   Not that I recall.

23      Q   Do you know Walter Kendall Myers?

24      A   No.

25      Q   Ever met Mr. Myers?

1 A No, not that I recall.

2 Q Do you know Gwendolyn Myers?

3 A No, not that I recall.

4 Q Ever had occasion to have been in a  
5 function with Mr. or Mrs. Myers?

6 A I wouldn't have recognized them. I  
7 wouldn't know, no, I don't know.

8 Q Ms. Wilhelm, you claim in your  
9 Complaint that Mr. Simmons has defamed you; is  
10 that correct?

11 A I believe so.

12 Q Claimed that he called you a Cuban  
13 operative and as a result damaged you; is that  
14 right?

15 A Yes, I do believe that.

16 Q With regards to your damages, let's  
17 talk a little bit about that.

18 A Um-hmm.

19 Q You claim that you had Puentes  
20 Cubanos and that that is in fact now going to be  
21 closed as a result of lack of funding; is that  
22 correct?

23 A Yes.



24 Q And you believe that that may be  
25 related to Mr. Simmons' statements?

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1 A I believe that it could be one of  
2 the reasons.

3 Q What other damages have you had as a  
4 result of this particular statement made by  
5 Mr. Simmons?

6 A Well, the fact that I have been  
7 called a Cuban spy in Miami. It's a horrendous  
8 charge in this emotionally charged community.

9 Q Okay.

10 A The fact that my projects have been  
11 tainted with that allegation.

12 Q How have they been tainted?

13 A Sir, by calling me a person who  
14 breaks the law, specifically that type of a charge  
15 is a severe blemish on my professional and  
16 personal life, very specifically in South Florida,  
17 not to mention nationally.

18 Q How are you damaged by that?

19 A Because I am breaking the law.

20 Q How are you damaged by that?

21 A Psychologically stressed. It only

22 takes one crazy in this community to come get me.

23 Only takes one. All right? And I am a target

24 now.

25 Q You weren't a target before?

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1 A Now more than ever.

2 Q Answer my question. Were you a

3 target before?

4 A I was a target before.

5 Q You received threats before,

6 correct?

7 A I have received threats before.

8 Q You have had people -- bomb threats

9 and blogs against you?

10 A At the conferences, et cetera.

11 Q Yes?

12 A Yes.

13 Q But you claim that now it's worse?

14 A You have raised the bar.

15 Mr. Simmons has raised the bar.

16 Q You have read Dr. Alvarez's

17 confession, yes?

18 A I read the confession, yes.

19 Q If his confession were true, then

20 you would agree that Mercedes Arces, pursuant to  
21 his own admission, is a Cuban operative?

22 MR. ROGOW: Object to the form.

23 THE WITNESS: If we were to believe  
24 everything that Carlos Alvarez says.

25

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1 BY MR. DORTA:

2 Q Do you have any reason to disbelieve  
3 what he says?

4 A I have no idea. He lied for so many  
5 years.

6 Q He lied to you about being a Cuban  
7 agent, you mean?

8 A Many years. He lied to the  
9 community about being a Cuban agent.

10 Q But if you were to believe his  
11 confession, then Mercedes Arce would be a Cuban  
12 agent, correct?

13 MR. ROGOW: Object to the form.

14 BY MR. DORTA:

15 Q Yes?

16 A If I were to believe the confession,  
17 Mercedes Arces could be an operative.

18 Q If you were to believe the  
19 confession, then Amado Soto would also be a Cuban  
20 agent?

21 MR. ROGOW: Object to the form  
22 again.

23 BY MR. DORTA:

24 Q Yes?

25 A Yes.

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1 Q If you were to believe the  
2 confession, obviously by his own admission Carlos  
3 Alvarez is a Cuban agent?

4 A Yes.

5 Q If you were to believe the  
6 confession, so would Milagros Martinez?

7 MR. ROGOW: Object to the form.

8 THE WITNESS: If I believe the  
9 confession, yes.

10 BY MR. DORTA:

11 Q So would Miriam Rodriguez?

12 MR. ROGOW: Object to the form.

13 THE WITNESS: Yes.

14 BY MR. DORTA:

15 Q You would agree that you have had

16 relationships in one way or another with all the  
17 people that I just mentioned, correct?

18 A Yes.

19 Q Dr. Alvarez made these allegations  
20 indicating that you had ties to the Cuban  
21 Government; you never sued Dr. Alvarez, did you?

22 MR. ROGOW: Repeat the question.

23 BY MR. DORTA:

24 Q Dr. Alvarez has indicated that you  
25 had ties to the Cuban Government and ties to all

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1 these people. You never sued Dr. Alvarez, did  
2 you?

3 A Ties in my opinion means that I know  
4 some people in the Cuban Government, that I know  
5 some of these people. Yes, I have projects with  
6 some of these people. I have met with some of  
7 these people.

8 If you equate that as having a tie,  
9 then I would have to say yes. Okay? I don't know  
10 in the context of in what context he used the word  
11 tie. You would have to ask Mr. Alvarez.

12 MR. DORTA: Showing you what I'm  
13 going to mark as Exhibit 3 for

14 Identification, showing your attorneys  
15 first.  
16 (Thereupon, the referred-to document  
17 was marked as Defendant's Exhibit  
18 No. 3 for Identification).

19 BY MR. DORTA:

20 Q Do you recognize that?

21 A Yes.

22 Q What is it?

23 A It's a brochure that was printed in  
24 Cuba about this conference on gender, yes.

25 Q Is that the conference that you

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1 testified that Puentes Cubanos --

2 A Attended, took a delegation.

3 Q Therefore -- if I can finish my  
4 question -- that would have been the program that  
5 you indicated that Puentes Cubanos had gone with  
6 regard to women's health in the year 2000; is that  
7 the same program?

8 A To Santiago.

9 Q Is this the one that your husband  
10 attended with you?

11 A Yes.

12 Q I highlighted a portion there with  
13 regards to Puentes Cubanos being one of the  
14 sponsors. Can you read into the record the  
15 highlighted portion -- the other portion, as to  
16 who was arranging the travel?

17 A Marazul Tours is the official  
18 operator for this event.

19 Q With regards to Marazul Tours, as  
20 you sit here today, do you have any information  
21 with regards to their position in Cuban  
22 Intelligence?

23 A Absolutely not.

24 Q At no time did you know that public  
25 record, public knowledge, that they were a front

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1 for the Cuban Intelligence?

2 MR. ROGOW: Object to the form.

3 BY MR. DORTA:

4 Q I'm asking if she knows.

5 A Absolutely not.

6 Q This is the first you hear of it?

7 A This is the first I hear of it.

8 Q So it would surprise you then, yes?

9 MR. ROGOW: Object to the form

10 again.

11 THE WITNESS: Would you repeat the  
12 question, please?

13 BY MR. DORTA:

14 Q It would surprise you if Marazul was  
15 in fact a front for Cuban Intelligence, for the  
16 Cuban Government?

17 MR. ROGOW: Object to the form.

18 THE WITNESS: It would surprise me.

19 MR. DORTA: I'm going to attach that  
20 as an exhibit.

21 BY MR. DORTA:

22 Q Do you know any members of the  
23 United States State Department?

24 A At present?

25 Q Yes, ma'am.

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1 A No.

2 Q Before today did you know any  
3 members of the U.S. State Department?

4 A Absolutely.

5 Q Who did you know?

6 A I met regularly with Ambassador  
7 Vicky Huddleston during her tenure as Ambassador



8 to Cuba. I met with her predecessor. Oh, my  
9 goodness, I don't remember his name; it's been a  
10 while.

11 I met with Mr. Cason once in Havana  
12 in his office and I met with some of his deputies  
13 after that. When I visited Cuba, I met with all  
14 these people.

15 And I also met with people from the  
16 Cuba Desk at State, Kevin Whittaker, I met with  
17 him. The guy before him, who then became  
18 Ambassador to Venezuela and his name was -- I met  
19 with him. I don't remember his name.

20 Q What were the purposes of your  
21 meeting with Ambassador Huddleston?

22 A To keep them abreast of my programs,  
23 which she wholeheartedly supported.

24 Q How many occasions did you meet with  
25 the ambassador?

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1 A With Ambassador Huddleston?

2 Q Um-hmm.

3 A In Cuba, I would probably say five  
4 or six times, maybe more.

5 Q What were your subsequent meetings

6 with Cason and his deputies?

7 A I made it a point of visiting our  
8 representatives in Cuba because I happen to be an  
9 American citizen.

10 Q When did you become an American  
11 citizen?

12 A Let's see. May of 1970.

13 Q Have you ever corroborated, produced  
14 or written any type of movie or documentary?

15 A I helped produce a documentary  
16 called "Those I Left Behind."

17 Q When was that?

18 A That was 2005.

19 Q What was that about?

20 A That was about the travel  
21 restrictions for Cuban-American families.

22 Q Any other involvement in the motion  
23 picture industry?

24 A I have been on a documentary about  
25 the Pedro Pan.

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1 Q What was that called?

2 A I want to say, "The Lost Apple," but  
3 I'm not sure. No, I'm not sure. I don't remember

4 the name.

5 Q When was that?

6 A Maybe nine years ago, eight, nine  
7 years ago.

8 Q Any other motion pictures?

9 A Not that I recall.

10 Q Were you involved in a picture  
11 called "Tommy Cuba"?

12 A Tommy Cuba, yes, I was involved in  
13 Tommy Cuba. Thank you.

14 Q Can you tell me --

15 A What?

16 Q Can you tell me about that?

17 A Thank you for reminding me. Yes, I  
18 was, with Megan Williams, the director. That was  
19 also, I don't know, six, seven years ago.

20 Q How were you featured in that  
21 particular documentary?

22 A Somebody who wanted reconciliation  
23 of the Cuban family.

24 Q Had you ever met Chris Simmons prior  
25 to today?

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1 A No, I have never had the pleasure.

2 Q And you have never spoken to him or  
3 to any of his representatives? Have you spoken to  
4 him directly or indirectly is, I guess is my  
5 question.

6 A I have never spoken to Mr. Simmons.

7 Q Any reason why Mr. Simmons would  
8 make up the allegations that were given at the  
9 Oscar Haza show?

10 MR. ROGOW: Object to the form.

11 THE WITNESS: You would have to ask  
12 Mr. Simmons.

13 BY MR. DORTA:

14 Q So you wouldn't know of any reason  
15 as to why he would do it?

16 A No, I would not know of any reasons  
17 why he would do it.

18 Q Did anyone from Channel 41  
19 television program A Mano Limpia ever contact you  
20 to appear as a guest of the show prior to the  
21 October 8 airing?

22 A I told you that I was a guest at the  
23 program one time and they contacted me many times  
24 and I, after that first appearance, I told them  
25 that I would not come back.

1 Q Why was that?

2 A Because they changed the lineup and  
3 I considered that extremely unprofessional.

4 Q What do you mean by that, changed  
5 the lineup?

6 A When a producer of a program calls  
7 you and tells you what the program is all about  
8 and what the theme is all about and you go based  
9 on, tell me who is the lineup, the pro and con on  
10 this particular theme, and you agree to rules of  
11 the game, I expect the rules of the game to be  
12 kept. And if they are changed, I expect any  
13 professional to contact me and say, "By the way,  
14 so and so, so and so, so and so are not coming and  
15 instead we are bringing so and so, so and so, so  
16 and so. But it gives me the opportunity to say  
17 based on the changes of the rules I will either  
18 come or not come. That wasn't done.

19 Q So in your initial appearance on  
20 Oscar Haza there was a change, what you just  
21 described, occurred?

22 A Yes, sir.

23 Q And when you arrived there was a  
24 totally different panel from what you were told?

25 A With the exception of one, the whole

1 panel had changed. With the exception of me and  
2 somebody else, the whole panel had changed.

3 Q So you felt you were ambushed?

4 A I felt ambushed and I felt it was  
5 extremely unprofessional.

6 Q Did you decide not to do the show  
7 when that happened?

8 A I elected to do the show because the  
9 theme was too important for me to walk out, so I  
10 did the show and I'm glad I did the show. And I  
11 vowed never to return again, and I haven't.

12 Q Have you seen the show since?

13 A Very sporadically. I don't waste my  
14 time.

15 Q On October 8 of 2008 you didn't see  
16 the show?

17 A No, I didn't.

18 Q I asked you in your Interrogatory  
19 responses or questions, when did you first become  
20 aware of the show and you indicated that you had  
21 friends call you during the show. Can you tell me  
22 about that?

23 A Almost at the end of the show I  
24 received the first call telling me, "Do you

25 realize that this is being said of you right now.

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1 Are you watching the Oscar Haza show."

2 And my comments were the same as the  
3 ones I told you: I don't watch that show.

4 So they told me, "Well, you better,  
5 because they are saying this."

6 By the time I turned on TV my spot  
7 was gone, it was too late. And I received two  
8 other calls that same night.

9 Q Who gave you that first call?

10 A I wrote it down. Tony Jimenez, a  
11 friend of mine.

12 Q Tony Jimenez?

13 A Tony Jimenez.

14 Q In your subsequent Answers to  
15 Interrogatories or Amended Responses, you  
16 indicated the same telephone for Tony and Ileana  
17 Casanova. Are they related?

18 A Oh, they don't have the same phone  
19 number. They are not related.

20 Q Different addresses, different  
21 people?

22 A Different addresses, different

23 people.

24 Q They are not a couple?

25 A No, not at all.

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1 Q So Tony Jimenez was the first person  
2 to call you?

3 A Exactly.

4 Q And Tony says to you, "Are you  
5 watching this?"

6 A Yes.

7 Q What does Tony say happened, said  
8 that he just saw, what does he say to you?

9 A They are calling you a spy.

10 Q How do you react to that?

11 A I was outraged.

12 Q Angry?

13 A Yes, I would say so.

14 Q How long did your conversation with  
15 Tony last?

16 A Couple of minutes, I don't know.

17 Q Do you hang up with Tony and watch  
18 TV or did you turn on the TV with Tony on the  
19 phone?

20 A I told my husband to turn on the TV.



21 I was in a different room.

22 Q Do you watch the show with Tony on  
23 the phone or do you hang up the phone with Tony?

24 A I don't have a phone in the TV room.

25 I got another call.

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1 Q While Tony was on the phone?

2 A While Tony was on the phone, my  
3 friend Ileana called me.

4 Q Call waiting?

5 A Whatever. It was very fast.

6 Q And what does Ileana tell you?

7 A "Do you know what they are saying on  
8 the television," the same type.

9 And I said, "Yes, I have already  
10 heard from somebody who called me."

11 Q What is your relationship with Tony?

12 A I know Tony.

13 Q He is not a relative?

14 A No, not at all, just a friend.

15 Q How long have you known Tony?

16 A I have known Tony for maybe a year  
17 and a half to two years max.

18 Q How did you meet Tony?

19       A    I met Tony during the last  
20 presidential campaign.

21       Q    The Obama campaign?

22       A    Obama, and also the Congressional  
23 campaigns.

24       Q    What did Ileana tell you?

25       A    Excuse me?

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1       Q    What does Ileana tell you?

2       A    Basically the same thing.

3       Q    Did she give you specific facts as  
4 to what was said or just the general thing that  
5 you were being called a spy?

6       A    She basically told me, "You are  
7 being called a spy."

8       Q    What is the next person that you  
9 heard from?

10       A    The next person that I heard from,  
11 which I wrote down, was Joe Garcia.

12       Q    This is the same Joe Garcia that  
13 recently ran for Congress?

14       A    Yes.

15       Q    He calls you from his home in Miami?

16       A    From I would imagine a cell phone or

17 a phone, I don't know if it's a home number or a  
18 cell number that he called me from, I don't  
19 recall.

20 Q The phone number that you provided  
21 is a 202 area code, which is why I asked.

22 A That's his cell number.

23 Q What does Mr. Garcia say to you  
24 during the course of this conversation?

25 A They are -- I'm trying to find the

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1 word in English.

2 Q Tell me in Spanish.

3 A They are defaming me.

4 Q What was the word in Spanish, out of  
5 curiosity?

6 A Difamar.

7 Q And how long was the conversation  
8 with Mr. Garcia?

9 A Two or three minutes, maybe. I  
10 don't know. I can't say a time. I don't know.

11 Q What was the crux of the  
12 conversation other than the fact that you were  
13 being defamed and you were being called a spy.  
14 Was there anything else discussed?

15       A    This is outrageous.

16       Q    Did he say anything else?

17       A    No.

18       Q    Mr. Garcia, how long have you known

19 him?

20       A    I have known Joe Garcia, let's see,

21 from when he was the executive director of the

22 Cuban-American National Foundation.

23       Q    What year was that, approximately?

24       A    Oh, I don't know, four or five years

25 ago. Four years, something like that.

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1       Q    How long have you known Ileana?

2       A    I have known Ileana probably six or

3 seven years.

4       Q    When was the next time you heard

5 something with regards to the television show

6 after your conversation with Joe Garcia?

7       A    The following morning. Phone calls.

8       Q    Who called you the following

9 morning?

10       A    Excuse me?

11       Q    Who called you the following

12 morning?

13       A    I don't remember exactly who called  
14   me. I just remember specifically that night the  
15   three calls that I got. I turned off my phone  
16   because I was so distressed.

17       Q    Go ahead.

18       A    And then the phone calls started  
19   coming the following morning and I can't tell you  
20   in what order or who, but there were many.

21       Q    Many phone calls?

22       A    Many emails. Absolutely.

23       Q    The three individuals that contacted  
24   you the first day; Tony, Ileana and Joe, they  
25   didn't believe that you were a Cuban agent, did

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1   they?

2       A    Of course not.

3       Q    They were basically indicating that  
4   you were being defamed, I guess?

5       A    Yes.

6       Q    The following morning the subsequent  
7   phone calls that you received, were they at your  
8   home or at the Puentes Cubanos?

9       A    Probably at my home, my cell.

10   Mainly my cell. Could have been some at Puentes

11 Cubanos.

12 Q Did you speak to people or did you  
13 just have people take messages for you?

14 A I spoke to some people.

15 Q Who did you speak to?

16 A I spoke to some friends in  
17 Washington.

18 Q Who in Washington?

19 A That I work with. I don't remember  
20 the order. I may have spoken to the people from  
21 the Latin America Working Group, from the  
22 Washington office of Latin America. I am fairly  
23 certain that I spoke to Congressman Delahunt  
24 fairly soon after that. I have spoken to people  
25 in the -- some of the people that were also

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1 defamed that same day, that they were -- some of  
2 the people whose names appeared that same day. We  
3 called each other that same day, that second day.

4 Q The second day?

5 A Excuse me?

6 Q The second day you called each  
7 other?

8 A Yes, the second day we called each

9 other.

10 Q Anyone else that you spoke to?

11 A I'm sure I spoke to other people. I  
12 don't recall who.

13 Q Did you reach out to them or did  
14 they reach out to you?

15 A They reached out to me in the vast  
16 majority. I was extremely, extremely stressed and  
17 distressed over it, so they reached out to me.

18 Q Whom did you reach out to?

19 A My husband.

20 Q Other than your husband? Did you  
21 call anyone in particular?

22 A Yes, I did. I called a lawyer.

23 Q Other than the lawyer that you  
24 called, did you speak to anyone in particular that  
25 you decided, I'm going to call this person to let

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1 them know that these are false allegations?

2 A Besides my family, besides people  
3 that I work with, besides possibly some members of  
4 Congress, I did call a lawyer to find out what my  
5 rights were.

6 Q Okay. Not discussing any

7 conversation you may have had with that lawyer to  
8 find out what your rights were, phone calls, I  
9 want to focus on the phone calls you thought were  
10 important enough for you to call people and tell  
11 them, "Hey, this happened to me, this is not  
12 true." Did that ever happen?

13 A My lawyer.

14 Q Other than the lawyer?

15 A My lawyer was the most important  
16 phone call I made.

17 Q Other than your lawyer, did you make  
18 any other phone calls to say, "Hey, this is not  
19 true"?

20 A Phone calls were made to me.

21 Q Phone calls that you made: Were  
22 there any phone calls that you made specifically  
23 to let someone know that these allegations were  
24 not true at any time from the October 8 broadcast  
25 to the present, that you believed it necessary?

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1 A I'm sure that I contacted people. I  
2 contacted people in Washington.

3 Q Okay.

4 A I contacted people in the Foreign



5 Relations Committee of the U.S. Senate to make  
6 them aware this was going on against me.

7 Q So if I understand your testimony  
8 correctly, you used this publication that  
9 Mr. Simmons made on a TV show and you started  
10 calling people that hadn't heard to let them know  
11 about it; is that correct?

12 A Very specific people.

13 Q How many people?

14 A A very short list.

15 Q How short?

16 A Immediately? You are talking about  
17 twenty-four hours, forty-eight hours, forever?

18 Q I'm speaking from the October 8  
19 broadcast to the present.

20 A I can't quantify a number.

21 Q Then I need you to tell me who it  
22 was that you called and told them about it that  
23 hadn't heard about this particular statement.

24 A I don't think that I ever contacted  
25 anybody right after that had not heard of it

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1 except within maybe a twenty-four to forty-eight  
2 hour period when this had just become public.

3 Q Whom did you contact that had not  
4 heard of it?

5 A I think my attorney at that point  
6 had not heard about it.

7 Q Other than your attorney?

8 A People in Washington had not heard  
9 about it.

10 Q Who in Washington?

11 A People from the Washington office in  
12 Latin America, people from the Latin American  
13 Working Group.

14 Q Who in the Washington office of the  
15 Latin American Working Group?

16 A Jeff Thale, senior fellow.

17 Q Did you speak to one person or  
18 multiple persons from this organization?

19 A I don't remember.

20 Q So you spoke to Jeff Sales, was it?

21 A Jeff Thale.

22 Q Thale?

23 A Um-hmm.

24 Q Did you speak to anyone else other  
25 than Jeff?

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1       A    In that organization?

2       Q    Yes, ma'am.

3       A    Probably not.

4       Q    What other organization from

5 Washington did you contact?

6       A    The Latin America Working Group, to

7 let them know, more than likely.

8       Q    Do you remember? You say more than

9 likely. Are you sure?

10      A    More than likely. I don't know if I

11 specifically made that phone call within

12 forty-eight hours or not.

13      Q    Who did you speak to at that office?

14      A    I have spoken to Mavis Anderson, the

15 Cuba person at that office, the Cuba point person

16 at that office.

17      Q    Other than Mavis Anderson, would you

18 have spoken to anyone else at that particular

19 group?

20      A    Maybe some of their assistants that

21 answered the call. I don't recall.

22      Q    The assistant would have answered

23 the call, but not that you were asking for that

24 person?

25      A    No, I would have asked for Mavis.

1 Q Would you have asked for anyone  
2 else?

3 A At those offices, I would not have  
4 asked for anyone else.

5 Q Who else in Washington would you  
6 have called to let them know what was happening to  
7 you?

8 A Members of Congress.

9 Q Who in Congress?

10 A Representative William Delahunt.

11 Q Mr. Delahunt had not heard what had  
12 happened?

13 A Not within twenty-four hours, he had  
14 not. He doesn't watch that program.

15 Q But you called him and told him?

16 A I'm fairly sure that I called his  
17 office very soon after. I am fairly sure that  
18 would have been something that I would have done.

19 Q You contact anyone else?

20 And specifically, so you understand  
21 my question, October 8 broadcast to the present,  
22 people that had not heard what had happened that  
23 you contacted and told them what had happened.

24 A Family members, my children. I  
25 can't think of anybody else that I would have gone

1 out to give them --

2 Q When you say family members, you  
3 obviously mean your kids. Any other family  
4 members other than your kids?

5 A Not that I reached out to them. I  
6 think my cousins called me because they had heard  
7 about it.

8 Q At any point did you write a massive  
9 email to a bunch of people saying, "This isn't  
10 true, this just happened," or, "You are going to  
11 be hearing this"?

12 A I don't recall. I don't recall. I  
13 do know that ENCASA, that organization that I  
14 mentioned before, immediately contacted me. They  
15 had heard it. Some people watched this program  
16 somewhere else than in Miami and they had heard  
17 about it and they were horrified.

18 Q Did you write about this in your  
19 blog? You have a blog, don't you?

20 A I don't have a blog.

21 Q You don't have a blog?

22 A I don't have a blog.

23 Q Do you ever post anything in blogs?

24       A    Some people might have taken my  
25 letter that I wrote after the fact and put it on

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1   blogs.

2       Q    You wrote a letter after the fact?

3       A    I wrote a letter after I was  
4 interviewed by El Nuevo Herald, I wrote a letter  
5 telling my truth, which was never published at El  
6 Nuevo Herald.

7       Q    When was your interview with El  
8 Nuevo Herald?

9       A    My interview?

10      Q    Yes, ma'am.

11      A    I did not have an interview.

12      Q    I sorry, I thought you just said --

13      A    I sent the letter to El Nuevo Herald  
14 via email. It was never published.

15      Q    When did you send that letter to El  
16 Nuevo Herald?

17      A    As soon as I wrote it, maybe a week  
18 later, a few days later.

19      Q    You say a week later, you mean a  
20 week later from the October 8 episode?

21      A    Along these lines. I don't have the

22 exact date but it was probably within a week.

23 Q Did you reach out to any of the

24 media outlets that you had used in the past to

25 indicate that these allegations were false?

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1 A The media contacted me.

2 Q How soon after the show did the

3 media contact you?

4 A They contacted me that same night.

5 Q The same night?

6 A El Nuevo Herald contacted me

7 probably later on that night.

8 Q What time?

9 A I don't recall.

10 Q How much time --

11 A Shortly after the program.

12 Q Okay.

13 A Wanting a comment. And I remember

14 saying I have just been notified, I don't watch

15 the program and I'm going to contact my attorney.

16 And then they ran another story on the 9th, which

17 I basically said -- I don't have the copy of what

18 I said, but it was basically along those lines.

19 Q What was the story?

20 A I deny the allegations. And you  
21 will contact my attorney.

22 Q What was the story that was written  
23 about you on the 9th, what was the context of that  
24 story?

25 A The context was that Mr. Simmons,

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1 counterintelligence -- ex or retired  
2 counterintelligence officer, had appeared on Oscar  
3 Haza and presented three more spies, Cuban spies,  
4 appeared on A Mano Limpia, Channel 41, with more  
5 -- with names of more spies. And I guess they got  
6 his take as to why he thought these names applied.  
7 And then they had a quote from me and one from  
8 Lisandro and also one from Julia Sweig, denying  
9 the allegations.

10 Q Did you ever see the program in its  
11 entirety? Have you ever seen it?

12 A Yes, afterwards.

13 Q When was it that you saw the program  
14 in its entirety?

15 A As soon as I was able to get a copy  
16 of the tape. I immediately contacted the station  
17 and asked for a copy of the tape.



18 Q How soon did you get the copy of the  
19 tape?

20 A Within a few days, but I saw the  
21 program prior to that because it was already on  
22 the Internet where you can see it.

23 Q All right. And when you saw the  
24 program, what was it about Mr. Simmons's  
25 comments that were defamatory in nature

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1 specifically?

2 A The fact that he called me a Cuban  
3 agent.

4 Q Okay.

5 A The fact that he specifically said  
6 that Carlos Alvarez had burnt me. And the fact  
7 that he said I had multiple meetings with the FBI  
8 whereby I had been basically told to change my  
9 ways and now I was under the protection of such  
10 agency and basically reported to them.

11 Q Anything else?

12 A I believe -- well, there was a  
13 misstatement that was stated by Mr. Haza regarding  
14 my husband's line of business. They called my  
15 husband a retired military officer of high rank.

16 Q I'm sorry to interrupt you. That  
17 wasn't Mr. Simmons, that was Mr. Haza?  
18 A It was Mr. Haza but the peculiar  
19 thing about that question was that not only did  
20 Mr. Haza get it wrong, because I'm not married to  
21 Charles E. Wilhelm, the ex-head of SouCom, but I'm  
22 married to Charles C. Wilhelm, who happens to be a  
23 physician. And the most fascinating part of the  
24 whole thing is that when he asked Mr. Simmons  
25 whether he was aware that I was married to this

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1 high ranking military officer, Mr. Simmons, the  
2 expert counter-intelligence officer, didn't know  
3 of that, was not aware of that.

4 Q Because it's not the case, was it?

5 A Was not aware of who I was married  
6 to?

7 Q I'm saying, it wasn't the case that  
8 you were married to this ex-director of SouCom,  
9 that was Mr. Haza's mistake?

10 A The peculiar thing is that when he  
11 was asked whether he had that bit of information,  
12 since he had so much information, that he was not  
13 aware of that major mistake.

14 Q I don't know if I understand your  
15 testimony, I apologize.

16 A Well, I'm sorry.

17 Q He was not aware --

18 A Very sorry.

19 Q Ms. Wilhelm, he was not aware that  
20 Oscar Haza had made the mistake or he was not  
21 aware that Oscar Haza made an allegation that he  
22 was not aware of: That's the part I don't get.

23 A It was obviously clear to me and the  
24 people watching the program that Mr. Simmons, who  
25 knew so much about me, didn't even know who I was

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1 married to. And it would seem to me that if I was  
2 married to a high ranking member of the military  
3 ex-head of SouCom, that Mr. Simmons would know  
4 that I was married to a military man. My husband  
5 happens to be a physician.

6 Q Okay. With regards to the FBI, is  
7 it your testimony then that you have never been in  
8 contact with the FBI with regards to --

9 A Excuse me, what did you say?

10 Q With regards to the FBI, is it your  
11 testimony that you were not in contact with the

12 FBI in 2005?

13 A 2005?

14 Q Yes, ma'am.

15 A No, I have not been in contact with  
16 the FBI in 2005.

17 Q How about 2006?

18 A I have had two contacts via  
19 telephone with the FBI.

20 Q Let's talk about the most recent  
21 one.

22 A The most recent one happened, and  
23 I'll tell you exactly when it happened. It was my  
24 birthday. Well, they left a card trying to  
25 contact me on June 22, 2006. I was away on

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1 vacation and we were supposed to meet. My  
2 attorney contacted them and basically asked them  
3 what is the reason for the meeting and, just to  
4 talk about Cuba. They gave me the choice as to  
5 whether I wanted to meet or not and I elected not  
6 to meet because I had nothing to talk to them  
7 about.

8 Q Who was your attorney for that  
9 particular case?

10 A For that particular phone call?

11 Q Yes, ma'am.

12 A John de Leon.

13 Q Why did you find it necessary to

14 contact an attorney when you got the card from the

15 FBI?

16 A Because it seems to me that anybody

17 who has two inches of brain and is going to sit

18 with the FBI should always be accompanied by legal

19 representation. It is the American way.

20 Q Dr. Alvarez had already been

21 arrested at this time, correct?

22 A Dr. Alvarez -- he was in custody,

23 yes.

24 Q And you read his confession? His

25 confession was dated June of 2006, correct?

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1 A I had not read his confession until

2 June 5, 2009.

3 Q But his confession was dated in June

4 of 2006?

5 A If you say so.

6 Q Do you remember seeing that in his

7 confession?

8           A    I never read his confession until

9   June 9, 2009.

10          Q    Okay. Did you ever find out what  
11 specifically about Cuba they wanted to talk to you  
12 about?

13          A    No, I didn't, because I never met  
14 with them.

15          Q    Did your attorney ever find out what  
16 specifically about Cuba they wanted to talk to you  
17 about?

18          A    No, because they never told him.

19          Q    Did they ever mention anything about  
20 Cuban agents or spies or counter-intelligence or  
21 anything to that effect?

22          A    Never that my attorney told me.

23          Q    And they gave you, you said, the  
24 choice to meet with them or not; is that right?

25          A    They said they would like to talk to

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1   you about Cuba because you are a Cuba expert. I  
2   asked my attorney, does that mean I have to meet  
3   with them and he said it is strictly elective.

4                So I said, "Well, what would you  
5   recommend?"

6           He recommended not to meet: "You  
7 have nothing to tell them."

8           Q    You had nothing to --

9           A    He said if they need to meet with  
10 you for some real reason, I would imagine they  
11 have ways of subpoenaing me.

12          Q    You had nothing to hide?

13          A    Absolutely.

14          Q    Is there any further exchange with  
15 the FBI after that 2006 incident to date?

16          A    Never.

17          Q    Prior to the 2006 incident, you  
18 mentioned there was another contact with the FBI.  
19 Can you tell me about that?

20          A    It was when I was the executive  
21 director of the CCD. It must have been 1998, '97  
22 or '98. I can't give you the exact date. The CCD  
23 sponsored a radio program and at the end of the  
24 program on one occasion someone left a message  
25 that was very specific about bodily harm to me.

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1           Q    Let me stop you there and ask you  
2 what the name of the radio program was.

3           A    Excuse me?

4 Q What was the name of the radio  
5 program?

6 A Transition.

7 Q Transition?

8 A Transition.

9 Q When did that air?

10 A What?

11 Q Was it a weekly show?

12 A Daily, Monday through Friday.

13 Q And it had a time slot morning,

14 middle --

15 A It was in the afternoon. I want to

16 say 5:00.

17 Q Were you the person that was always

18 on or were you just a featured guest?

19 A I was never -- I was not the person

20 on. We had a person hosting the program.

21 Q Who was that?

22 A Cynthia Barrera was hosting the

23 program.

24 Q That's your Goddaughter, right?

25 A Yes. Ariel Hidalgo and Carmen --

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1 oh, boy. No, it wasn't Carmen, it was another



2 lady and I will think about her name. I want to  
3 say Carmen but I don't remember her last name.

4 Q And there was a message -- when you  
5 say message, was this a call in type show where  
6 people would call in and give their opinions or  
7 what type of format did the show have?

8 A The show had different formats, but  
9 usually the host would leave the last maybe ten  
10 minutes for calls. My thread did not air live.  
11 My thread was to my office, to my Cuban Committee  
12 for Democracy voicemail after the program  
13 specifically directed at me, bodily harm to me,  
14 and that's when I contacted the FBI.

15 Q Was the message in Spanish or in  
16 English?

17 A It was in Spanish.

18 Q What did the message say  
19 specifically?

20 A First of all, it was extremely crude  
21 and it was basically, "We will kill you, we will  
22 do you in."

23 Q When you say it was crude, was it  
24 full of obscenities?

25 A Full of obscenities.

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1 Q I'm not going to have you repeat the  
2 obscenities.

3 A No, I'd rather not.

4 Q But I need to know, were they saying  
5 why they wanted to kill you?

6 A For sponsoring a program against the  
7 embargo.

8 Q What radio station did this air on?

9 A Radio -- I'm trying to think of the  
10 radio dial at the time. 1450 AM.

11 Q Is that La Paz?

12 A No, it's not La Paz. I don't  
13 remember what it was called.

14 Q If you weren't part of the program  
15 but the CCD was sponsoring it, how did they get  
16 Silvia Wilhelm's name?

17 A I was executive director.

18 Q Of the CCD?

19 A Um-hmm.

20 Q You basically said that the program  
21 was the reason why you got the death threat. If  
22 you got the message in your office, where do you  
23 make that connection?

24 A I make the connection because the  
25 CCD was a very well known entity in Miami and

1 people knew not only about the program but about  
2 the CCD and who were the people associated with  
3 the CCD. In this case, I was the executive  
4 director.

5 Q This particular threat that you  
6 received whereby you were going to get bodily  
7 harmed, did they say you were going to get bodily  
8 harmed because you were a Communist, because you  
9 are a Castro sympathizer? Did they give you a  
10 reason as to why they wanted you --

11 A I'm sure all those were thrown in.  
12 I don't specifically remember all that they said  
13 but I do remember it being very crude, extremely  
14 nasty, and bodily harm is going to be done to you.

15 Q Did they give any particular  
16 information that was private in nature, as to  
17 where you lived, et cetera, that made you believe  
18 this threat was more credible than others?

19 A This is the first time that they had  
20 threatened me with bodily harm.

21 Q Prior to this you had never received  
22 an actual threat of bodily harm ever in your life?

23 A Not that I can remember.

24 Q And this particular threat, you went

25 to the FBI. Why didn't you call the City of Miami

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1 or Miami-Dade Police Department?

2 A Because I was aware that the FBI had  
3 a specific division that dealt with Cuban-American  
4 groups and all this type of threats that were  
5 going on at the time.

6 Q And you indicated in your Response  
7 to Interrogatories that you contacted what case  
8 agent?

9 A Luis Rodriguez. I think his last  
10 name is Luis Rodriguez.

11 Q How did you come in contact with  
12 Luis Rodriguez?

13 A I was given his phone number and I  
14 contacted him and told him what had happened.

15 Q Who gave you his phone number?

16 A Francisco Aruca.

17 Q Who is that?

18 A He is a radio commentary who has had  
19 many incidences of threats against him.

20 Q Luis Rodriguez; what, if anything,  
21 did he do with regards to this threat?

22 A Luis Rodriguez, when I had the

23 number, I mean, I had saved on my voicemail of my  
24 office the number where the call came from, I gave  
25 it to the FBI. They have ways to figure out where

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1 this number came from.

2 They went to visit the gentleman in  
3 Hialeah and basically told him that what he was  
4 doing was a crime and that I was going to take him  
5 to court if it continued. I never heard from him  
6 again.

7 Q So the person who gave you this  
8 death threat, you had the number on the caller  
9 I.D.?

10 A Yes, sir.

11 Q Did you ever hear from this  
12 individual again?

13 A I never heard from that individual  
14 again.

15 Q Was there ever a report done by the  
16 FBI that was given to you?

17 A Mr. Rodriguez called me back and  
18 told me that it was a very angry old man and that  
19 he thought it would put the end to this, that his  
20 visit and his colleague's visit would put the end

21 to this and I never heard from him again.

22 Q Other than that, have you ever been  
23 threatened with bodily harm to the present?

24 A Not directly, no.

25 Q Other than the two occasions you

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1 just described with the FBI, have you ever been  
2 contacted by the FBI?

3 A Not after that, no.

4 Q Have you ever contacted the FBI?

5 A No.

6 Q Other than the two occasions you  
7 just testified to?

8 A No.

9 Q Have you ever been contacted by any  
10 other U.S. Government, Law Enforcement Division?

11 A No.

12 Q Have you ever been contacted by the  
13 police, local police, state police, with  
14 regards to anything, with regards to any  
15 investigation, et cetera?

16 A I once was called by the police  
17 many, many years ago but it wasn't the local  
18 police, Tallahassee.

19 Q Okay. Tell me about the Tallahassee  
20 police.

21 A My son had gotten in trouble in  
22 college, he got drunk. What can I tell you? We  
23 all have to go through that.

24 Q You specifically. Have you ever --

25 A No.

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1 Q Have you ever been contacted by --

2 A No.

3 Q Let me finish the question.

4 A Pardon.

5 Q Have you ever been contacted by any  
6 law enforcement agency other than ones we just  
7 discussed right now for any reason whatsoever at  
8 any time in your life?

9 A No.

10 Q Were you ever informed by Carlos  
11 Alvarez's allegations that there was Cuban spies  
12 and that you were a Cuban spy, other than  
13 Mr. Simmons' statements?

14 A I did not understand your question.

15 Q It's a bad question. I'll do it  
16 from the beginning. Other than Mr. Simmons'

17 statements, were you ever told by anyone else that  
18 Carlos Alvarez's confession sort of implicated you  
19 as a Cuban spy?

20 A No.

21 Q You indicated in your Responses to  
22 Interrogatories that there were costs incurred  
23 with regards to these statements made by  
24 Mr. Simmons. Do you recall?

25 A Yes.

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1 Q Can you tell me some of those costs  
2 that were incurred by you?

3 A Well, without a question, my  
4 lawyers' fees.

5 Q How much is your lawyers' fees?

6 A Seventy-five.

7 Q Is that \$75,000?

8 A Yes.

9 Q Was that paid up front?

10 A Paid up front.

11 Q Was that paid as a flat fee  
12 retainer, was that paid by the hour, was it paid  
13 as an hourly retainer?

14 A Flat fee retainer.



15 Q Is he being paid by the hour? In  
16 other words, is he billing against that retainer?

17 A I think my husband knows that more  
18 than me. It is a flat fee.

19 Q Do you know how much he is charging  
20 by the hour?

21 A I don't.

22 MR. DORTA: I need a break for  
23 exactly five minutes. Is that okay? I  
24 just have to make a quick phone call.

25 (Thereupon, a brief recess was

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1 taken, after which the following  
2 proceedings were had:)

3 BY MR. DORTA:

4 Q In regards to your attorney, when we  
5 last left off, you indicated that you had hired  
6 him and that you were paying him a flat fee; is  
7 that right?

8 A Right.

9 Q The flat fee that you are paying  
10 your lawyer --

11 MR. ROGOW: I'd --

12 BY MR. DORTA:

13 Q Do you know exactly?  
14 A No. I have paid him \$75,000.  
15 Q And did you speak to any other  
16 attorneys other than Mr. Rogow, and I'm not asking  
17 for the substance of your conversation, I'm asking  
18 if you spoke to any other attorneys other than Mr.  
19 Rogow.  
20 A I spoke to John de Leon.  
21 Q With regards to this case?  
22 A With regards to this case.  
23 Q Any other attorneys?  
24 A I spoke to one more attorney. She  
25 is with a big firm downtown and she is -- we

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1 realized her specialty was broadcasting litigation  
2 or something, so we realized this was not the  
3 person to go with.  
4 Q Okay.  
5 A But I don't remember her name.  
6 Q Did you speak to the other attorneys  
7 with regards to how they would be compensated?  
8 A No.  
9 Q So the only attorney you actually  
10 spoke with regards to compensation was with Mr.

11 Rogow?

12 A Yes.

13 Q Is there any portion of his retainer  
14 contract that had a contingency clause to it?

15 A I'm not aware of that. I can't  
16 answer that question.

17 Q Did you sign the retainer agreement  
18 or did your husband sign the retainer agreement?

19 A I probably signed it.

20 Q Other than the \$75,000 that you paid  
21 to Mr. Rogow's office, have you paid any other, or  
22 had any other expenses as a result of the  
23 particular statements Mr. Simmons gave?

24 A I had to get a translation company  
25 do a written transcript of the program, both in

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1 English and then translated to Spanish. I had  
2 that done.

3 Q Why was that?

4 A What was that?

5 Q Why was that?

6 A Because I needed to show it to my  
7 attorney. I needed to read the entire content of  
8 the program, not just see the program. I needed

9 to read the content of the program.

10 Q Did you pay for that yourself or was  
11 that part of the \$75,000 fee?

12 A I paid for that myself.

13 Q \$75,000 fee, does that include costs  
14 or is that aside from costs?

15 A Aside.

16 Q Aside from costs?

17 A Probably.

18 MR. ROGOW: There is a \$75,000 fee  
19 that was paid. That's not necessarily the  
20 end of the fee. We are going to see how  
21 this unravels. And costs are separate, so  
22 no secrets.

23 BY MR. DORTA:

24 Q Okay.

25 A Thank you.

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1 Q Translation company, how much did  
2 they charge you for the translating of the  
3 program?

4 A It was close to \$500, I think.

5 Q Did they transcribe it first and  
6 then translate it?

7 A Exactly.

8 Q And that was \$500?

9 A Yeah.

10 Q Other than the transcribing and  
11 translation \$500 and the \$75,000 to Mr. Rogow's  
12 office, any other expenses that you have had  
13 related to this case?

14 A I have had to contact the  
15 translation company for my statement that needed  
16 to be translated to Spanish. I wanted it in  
17 Spanish and in English. I can't put a number. I  
18 can't put a number.

19 Q This is different from the expense  
20 you had already done on the \$500, or this was part  
21 and parcel of the same?

22 A No, it's in addition to.

23 Q In addition. And my phone rang and  
24 I went a little bit off kilter to what you were  
25 saying. This is the same translation and

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1 transcript for the \$500 of the program?

2 A It's in addition to.

3 Q Right. But you had already had it  
4 translated and transcribed?

5       A    The program, the content of the  
6 program. I'm talking, in addition they translated  
7 my statement.

8       Q    What statement?

9       A    That I sent to the press, to the El  
10 Nuevo Herald, which they never published.

11       Q    So the statement that you prepared  
12 was also translated from Spanish to English?

13       A    It was translated from English to  
14 Spanish.

15       Q    From English to Spanish?

16       A    Yes, I did it in English, they  
17 translated into Spanish.

18       Q    Why?

19       A    Because I write better in English  
20 than I do in Spanish.

21       Q    Why have it translated?

22       A    Because I wanted it in both  
23 languages.

24       Q    You don't recall the cost of that?

25       A    No. I would have to go back.

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1       Q    Is it more than \$500?

2       A    I don't think so.

3 Q Okay. Any other monetary out of  
4 pocket expenses that you have had as a result of  
5 this case?

6 A No. Going to see my lawyer takes  
7 time, takes money. I can't think of anything  
8 else.

9 Q Have you ever had to hire a  
10 bodyguard or any form of security to protect you  
11 at any time in your life?

12 A No.

13 Q Since October of 2008, have you  
14 since hired a bodyguard or security company to  
15 protect you?

16 A No.

17 Q With regards to the emotional  
18 distress we discussed earlier, you indicated that  
19 Mr. Simmons' statements were the ones that you  
20 live in heightened anxiety, I think that's what  
21 you said. Did I get that right?

22 A I would say that's correct.

23 Q And because as a Cuban spy --  
24 labeled as a Cuban spy, you are now a target to  
25 the exile community?

1       A    To some members of the exile  
2 community.

3       Q    Have you received any threats from  
4 anyone as a result of Mr. Simmons' statements?

5       A    No, I have not.

6       Q    Can you tell me about this  
7 heightened anxiety that you testified to earlier?  
8 Be more specific with regards to the anxiety you  
9 feel.

10      A    I live in a community where this  
11 issue is highly emotional and some people in the  
12 community feel very, very strongly about not  
13 allowing any change of policy. And the minute you  
14 label somebody a spy of that type of a government  
15 puts you at risk. You only need one lunatic, only  
16 one.

17           My anxiety was increased when a  
18 certain individual was on the radio a week and a  
19 half ago, not only supporting Mr. Simmons but also  
20 saying that he believed the allegations; i.e.,  
21 that I am a spy. And this man at one point was a  
22 convicted terrorist who served a jail sentence for  
23 that, for a bomb that he placed in Miami.

24      Q    Who was this man?

25      A    Antonio de la Cosa.



1       Q   The emotional distress that you  
2 indicated in your Interrogatories and your  
3 testimony that you have been suffering, have you  
4 received any medical attention for that emotional  
5 distress?

6       A   I live with my physician husband and  
7 he knows how to treat me.

8       Q   So in response to my question, have  
9 you received any medical treatment as a result of  
10 your emotional distress?

11      A   Apart from my husband?

12      Q   Are you saying your husband --

13      A   Apart from my husband? My husband  
14 is a physician.

15      Q   Are you saying your husband treated  
16 you for emotional distress?

17      A   My husband knows when I need a  
18 Valium. My husband knows when I need to calm  
19 down. He knows me.

20      Q   Is that a yes?

21      A   Yes, my husband.

22      Q   Your husband is an internist,  
23 correct?

24      A   Yes.

25      Q   And is it your testimony then that

1 your husband prescribes medication as he sees fit

2 determining your emotional state?

3 A Nothing has been a prescription

4 drug.

5 Q So Valium is not a prescription

6 drug?

7 A No, no. I took something less than

8 a Valium. I said Valium mainly to show something

9 that was a calming effect. No, it was not Valium.

10 Q What is less than a Valium that you

11 indicated? Tylenol?

12 A No, Tylenol is for pain.

13 Q Okay.

14 A I have taken a lot of Advil for

15 my -- I'm trying to think now. No. Just Advil.

16 Q You have never received anything

17 then with regards from your husband, any type of

18 pill to help you relax; is that correct?

19 A Benadryl to sleep.

20 Q Benadryl, the allergy --

21 A It's very good for sleep.

22 Q Antihistamine?

23 A Antihistamine puts you to sleep,

24 makes you relax and puts you to sleep and I have  
25 taken Benadryl to sleep.

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1 Q So other than your husband, you  
2 received no medical attention for your emotional  
3 distress. Have you sought any counseling?

4 A No.

5 Q Have you sought any substance abuse  
6 counseling?

7 A No.

8 Q Have you ever sought substance abuse  
9 counseling in your lifetime?

10 A Never.

11 Q Have you ever had any psychological  
12 counseling in your lifetime?

13 A Marriage counseling.

14 Q Other than marriage counseling?

15 A Never.

16 Q Was the marriage counseling with  
17 your first marriage or your second marriage?

18 A Second.

19 Q When was the last time you had  
20 marriage counseling?

21 A Oh, my goodness. Oh, over twelve,

22 fifteen years ago.

23 Q Have you ever had any other type of  
24 counseling other than what you described to date?

25 A No.

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1 Q Can you describe some of the  
2 emotional distress that you claim you have  
3 suffered as a result of Mr. Simmons' statements?  
4 And you have already mentioned the fact that you  
5 believe that you were a target. My question  
6 specifically is, some of the symptomology that you  
7 may have related to the emotional distress, if  
8 any.

9 A Depression at times.

10 Q Anything else?

11 A A lot of crying. That's part of  
12 depression, obviously.

13 Q Okay.

14 A Lack of sleep. That's basically it.

15 Q Other than the lack of sleep, the  
16 crying and depression, is there any other  
17 symptomology with regards to the emotional  
18 distress that you are claiming as a result of  
19 Mr. Simmons' statements?

20       A    I have had stomach problems but, you  
21 know, I can't assure you that they are related.  
22 But I obviously have had a hyperactive stomach.

23       Q    Are you currently --

24       A    Lately.

25       Q    Are you currently or have you ever

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1    taken a prescription medication on a regular  
2    basis?

3       A    Hormonal pills. Prescription  
4    medication? I have taken pain medication after  
5    some hospitalizations.

6       Q    Let me stop you there. Currently,  
7    are you taking any prescription medication?

8       A    Right now my hormonal -- it's not a  
9    pill, it's actually a foam, and my calcium that  
10   also needs to be prescribed.

11      Q    And both of those are prescription,  
12   yes?

13      A    Both of those are prescription.

14      Q    You are not prescribed anything with  
15   regards to depression?

16      A    No.

17      Q    You are not on Paxil or any of those

18 anti-depressants?

19 A No.

20 Q Have you ever been clinically

21 diagnosed with depression?

22 MR. ROGOW: Can we have a time

23 frame?

24 THE WITNESS: No.

25

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1 BY MR. DORTA:

2 Q At any time in your entire life,

3 from the beginning of time to the present?

4 A No.

5 Q Why have you not gone to see a

6 doctor with regards to this alleged depression?

7 A Because I can handle it myself with

8 my husband's help.

9 Q Prior to October of 2008, did you

10 ever have depression before?

11 A I have been depressed sometimes when

12 something happens to my children, when family

13 situations get hard. Yes, I would imagine I have

14 been depressed before; the death of a relative or

15 a loved one. I mean, of course I have been

16 depressed before.

17 Q We put in your Interrogatories to  
18 give me the doctors that you have treated with in  
19 the past and there was an objection with  
20 regards to privilege, and I spoke to your  
21 attorney, your attorney indicated that he was not  
22 making a claim with regards to the -- that you had  
23 not sought any medical treatment as a result of  
24 any alleged damage you had. And I just want it to  
25 be clear on the record that was case so I didn't

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1 have to ask questions about your prior doctors,  
2 because that would be the next line of questioning  
3 that I have.

4 MR. ROGOW: It is the case.

5 BY MR. DORTA:

6 Q So basically the fact that you are  
7 having what you believe to be depression hasn't  
8 been clinically diagnosed by anyone, is not going  
9 to be an issue in this case; do we agree on that?

10 MR. ROGOW: It's only going to be  
11 her subjective feelings of being  
12 depressed, but there has been no treatment  
13 of depression and no diagnosis of

14 depression.

15 BY MR. DORTA:

16 Q Your husband isn't going to come and  
17 testify later that you have been depressed and as  
18 a doctor he knows you have been depressed?

19 A Too early to tell.

20 Q Well, time will tell?

21 MR. ROGOW: He might say she has  
22 been difficult to live with but I don't  
23 think he is going to say she has been  
24 depressed.

25

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1 BY MR. DORTA:

2 Q Other than the depression that you  
3 have described, any other emotional distress that  
4 you can relate to Mr. Simmons' statements?

5 A Social alienation to some degree.  
6 People that would invite me before. And this is  
7 totally subjective, obviously.

8 Q Okay.

9 A I cannot absolutely -- but people  
10 that would invite me to a dinner before or a  
11 meeting before are not doing that --



12 Q Who?

13 A -- anymore. So this is --

14 Q Who is that?

15 A Some friends of mine from my youth

16 are not including me on meetings that -- some very

17 social things that we used to have before.

18 Q What are their names?

19 A Oh, my goodness. Carolina Camp.

20 I mean, I can't -- for example --

21 I'll think of the name in a minute. This is how I

22 feel, that I have been alienated from some of

23 these things.

24 Q Has anyone told you that the reason

25 why they are not socially engaging you or your

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1 husband is because of Mr. Simmons' statements?

2 A Nobody has told me that.

3 Q Has anyone told you that the reason

4 why they are not giving funding to Puentes Cubanos

5 is because of Mr. Simmons' statements?

6 A Nobody has told me that.

7 Q Anyone told you that they believe

8 you are in fact a Cuban agent?

9 A Nobody has told me to my face, no.

10 Q You testified, you wrote in your  
11 Interrogatory responses that there was -- you lost  
12 funding for projects. I assume we went over that  
13 with regards to Puentes. Do you attribute any  
14 other loss of income and/or funding to  
15 Mr. Simmons' statements other than what we have  
16 discussed thus far?

17 A No, I can't think of any.

18 Q So that's basically the Puentes  
19 Cubanos and the lack of funding to the foundation  
20 that may or may not be related to, you testified  
21 to, correct?

22 A Correct.

23 Q Nothing else?

24 A Not that I can think of.

25 Q Have you lost any other form of

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1 compensation as a result of Mr. Simmons'  
2 statements?

3 A Not that I can think of.

4 Q Has your reputation in the community  
5 been hurt as a result of these statements as far  
6 as subjectively?

7 A Anybody who is called a Cuban spy in

8 South Florida's reputation has suffered.

9 Q Can you tell me how it has suffered  
10 specifically, other than what we have already  
11 discussed. I'm not going to have you repeat  
12 everything.

13 A A lot of gossip going around at  
14 dinner parties that I'm not on, that then I find  
15 out is happening and it is the subject of  
16 conversation. I think that is a definite hit to  
17 your reputation.

18 Q Any other examples that you can give  
19 me with regards to how this has affected your  
20 reputation?

21 A Except for what I told you already,  
22 subjective is very subjective. The fact that I am  
23 no longer invited to some things that I used to be  
24 invited before.

25 Q From a business standpoint, have you

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1 lost business opportunities as a result of these  
2 statements?

3 A I wasn't looking for business  
4 opportunities at the time, so I wouldn't know.

5 Q Have you done anything in order to

6 repair, to try repairing the damage or the injury  
7 that you may have had as a result of the  
8 statements made by Mr. Simmons other than your  
9 letter to El Nuevo Herald?

10 A I'm taking him to court.

11 Q Other than that, have you done  
12 anything else?

13 A No.

14 Q You indicated that you have security  
15 concerns in your Responses to Interrogatories. We  
16 have gone over your security concerns and the fact  
17 that now you feel that you are a target. With  
18 regards to security, is there anything else that  
19 you believe is attributed to Mr. Simmons'  
20 statements other than you believing that you are a  
21 target?

22 A Yes, I believe I'm a target.

23 Q Other than that, is there anything  
24 else?

25 A Could you rephrase that question?

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1 Q Sure. It was probably a bad  
2 question.

3 A Yeah.

4 Q You testified that you now believe  
5 that you are a target because of security concerns  
6 and you now have security concerns. What have you  
7 done to alleviate the security concerns, if  
8 anything?

9 A I live in a guarded community.

10 Q You lived there before October?

11 A I lived there before October.

12 Q So other than that?

13 A I have not done anything else to  
14 safeguard my security.

15 Q You haven't changed your patterns or  
16 anything to that effect with regards to that,  
17 correct?

18 A I may think twice about going to  
19 some places.

20 Q Like where?

21 A I may think twice going to  
22 Versailles.

23 Q Did you --

24 A Yeah, I used to go more often.

25 Q So other than going to Versailles,

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1 can you give me any examples of things that you no

2 longer do that you did prior to the statements?

3 A I can't give you an exact example,  
4 but I am much more careful where I am seen or not  
5 seen.

6 Q Okay. Let me speak to my client  
7 outside.

8 (Thereupon, there was a discussion  
9 off the record, after which the  
10 following proceedings were had:)

11 MR. ROGOW: There is two things we  
12 want to correct.

13 MR. DORTA: On the record?

14 MR. ROGOW: Yes.

15 Washington, New York should be  
16 Washington, D.C. because she said  
17 Washington, New York on a couple of  
18 occasions.

19 Then there was the exchange between  
20 you and Ms. Wilhelm where she made a  
21 remark about breaking the law, and I asked  
22 the court reporter to mark it and it was  
23 kind of confusing, so if you want to go  
24 back to that point and let's clear it up.

25 MR. DORTA: Sure.

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1 (Thereupon, the question was read  
2 by the reporter as recorded)

3 MR. ROGOW: What she meant is that,  
4 "I am accused of breaking the law."

5 THE WITNESS: Exactly.

6 MR. ROGOW: So that phrase was lost  
7 in --

8 BY MR. DORTA:

9 Q That's fine.

10 A There was one more thing.

11 Q Sure.

12 A I had mentioned three hosts to the  
13 radio program, Transition, and I told you the  
14 first name of one of them, I told you I couldn't  
15 remember the last name. I did remember the last  
16 name. Her last name is Duarte, Carmen Duarte, was  
17 the other host of that program.

18 Q Ms. Wilhelm, will you describe your  
19 relationship with Francisco Aruca?

20 A I know Francisco Aruca.

21 Q How long have you known him?

22 A Since I was with the CCD, probably  
23 '97 or '98.

24 Q How did you meet Mr. Aruca?

25 A We went to a dinner together that

1 somebody put together.

2 Q In Cuba?

3 A In Miami.

4 Q In Miami, I'm sorry. In Miami.

5 What does Mr. Aruca do?

6 A Mr. Aruca, I believe, is the  
7 Chairman of the Board of Marazul. Maybe he is  
8 still the chair, maybe he is not any more. And  
9 Mr. Aruca has -- he is a radio commentator, has  
10 been a radio commentator for many, many years.

11 Q You said Marazul. That's the same  
12 name that shows up on the Defense Exhibit 3?

13 A Absolutely.

14 Q And what position does he have at  
15 Marazul?

16 A He could still be the Chairman of  
17 the Board but maybe he is retired from that  
18 position. I know he doesn't have an operational  
19 job any more. He retired a long time ago from  
20 actual operations at the travel agency.

21 Q When was the last time you spoke to  
22 him?

23 A The last time I spoke to Aruca could  
24 have been maybe one or two weeks ago.



25 Q What was the context of that

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1 conversation?

2 A Could have been -- I don't know  
3 exactly the context of the conversation. I'm sure  
4 it had to do with Cuba.

5 Q Have you ever traveled to Cuba with  
6 Mr. Aruca?

7 A I have never traveled to Cuba with  
8 Mr. Aruca.

9 Q Have you ever seen Mr. Aruca in  
10 Cuba?

11 A I have seen Mr. Aruca in Cuba once.

12 Q When was that?

13 A It could have been last year.

14 Q 2008?

15 A 2008.

16 Q Approximately what month?

17 A Gosh, goodness. Maybe sometime in  
18 the spring. I don't remember exactly. We had  
19 coffee together at The National.

20 Q 2008 you visited Cuba on three  
21 occasions; they were all with the JCC of Boca  
22 religious.

23 A Right. And give me the dates again,

24 refresh my memory.

25 Q Sure. January 22 to 28 of 2008, May

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1 14 to 19 of 2008, October 28 to November 2nd of  
2 2008.

3 A No, I'm speculating as to when it  
4 was. It was last year but I don't remember which  
5 one of those trips.

6 Q So the trip that you met or saw  
7 Mr. Aruca in Cuba would have been one of those  
8 three, you just don't recall which?

9 A Right.

10 Q You went to Cuba and met him there  
11 or you traveled to Cuba together?

12 A I went to Cuba with the JCC. I  
13 happened to have seen him at a restaurant where I  
14 was having dinner and then we decided, hey, let's  
15 have coffee tomorrow.

16 Q Okay.

17 A That simple.

18 Q Did you have coffee the next day by  
19 yourself or with others?

20 A I had coffee with him and with Mandy

21 Garcia.

22 Q Who was that?

23 A The president of Marazul.

24 Q With regards to the defamation and

25 the questioning that I was asking you, I want to

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1 clarify some points. I'll tell you what the

2 points are.

3 We were talking about you contacting

4 people in Washington that had not heard about the

5 statement and you indicated that you spoke to

6 several Congressmen and then you gave me the name

7 of one. Can you tell me some of the other

8 Congressmen that you spoke to in D.C. after the

9 publication but that didn't know about it, other

10 than the one you mentioned?

11 A Representative Jeff Flake. I spoke

12 to his legislative assistant.

13 Q Did you speak to him personally?

14 A Not to him personally.

15 Q What did you tell the legislative

16 assistant?

17 A That this had occurred in Miami and

18 he needed to be aware that this was happening,

19 because I am somebody who works with them very  
20 closely on opening travel to Cuba.

21 Q Anyone else, any other  
22 representative or Congressman or Congresswoman  
23 that you would have called that did not know about  
24 the statement that you haven't already discussed?

25 A I do know that I talked to the

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1 office of Senator Dodd.

2 Q Okay.

3 A I did not talk to the senator  
4 directly.

5 Q Did you give a detailed message to  
6 Senator Dodd about what was going on?

7 A I gave a detailed message to his  
8 assistant about what was going on.

9 Q These phone calls, did they all  
10 occur at or around the same time?

11 A I don't recall.

12 Q Any other Congressmen that you  
13 contacted after this statement that we haven't  
14 already discussed? Any members of Congress?

15 A No.

16 Q With regards to the groups in

17 Washington, you indicated that the Foreign  
18 Relations Committee, you contacted them and let  
19 them know what was going on. Whom did you speak  
20 to at the Foreign Relations Committee?

21 A I spoke to Fulton Armstrong.

22 Q To whom, I'm sorry?

23 A Fulton Armstrong.

24 Q Who is that?

25 A He is the democratic point person in

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1 the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

2 Q What, if anything, did you tell  
3 Mr. Armstrong?

4 A I told Mr. Armstrong that  
5 Mr. Simmons had been back on TV making  
6 denunciations, alleged spies in our community.

7 Q What, if anything, did he say as a  
8 result of that?

9 A Not much. He just received the  
10 information.

11 MR. DORTA: Okay. I have no further  
12 questions. You have the right to read or  
13 waive.

14 MR. ROGOW: We'll read, and I have

15 no questions.  
16 MR. DORTA: Are you going to order?  
17 MR. ROGOW: Are you? Should we wait  
18 and see?  
19 MR. DORTA: We'll order.  
20 MR. ROGOW: Then I'll take a copy.  
21 (Thereupon, the deposition was concluded.  
22 (Reading and signing were not waived.)  
23  
24  
25

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2  
3 I, \_\_\_\_\_, do hereby  
4 certify that I have read the foregoing deposition  
5 and that the same is a true and accurate  
6 transcript of my testimony, except for attached  
7 amendments, if any.

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The signature above of \_\_\_\_\_  
was subscribed to and sworn to before me this  
\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2009.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public

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CERTIFICATE

I, Nancy Atkins, hereby certify that  
I did stenographically report the foregoing  
proceedings and that this transcript is a true  
and correct record thereof, taken before me at  
the time and place stated in the caption thereof.  
I further certify that I am not an  
attorney or counsel to either of the parties, nor  
a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel

11 connected with said cause, nor financially or  
12 otherwise interested in the event thereof.

13 Dated this 20th day of June, 2009.

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Nancy Atkins

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1 CERTIFICATE OF OATH

2 STATE OF FLORIDA )

: SS

3 COUNTY OF DADE :

4

5

6 I, Nancy Atkins, the undersigned

7 authority, certify that SILVIA WILHELM

8 personally appeared before me and was duly



9 sworn.

10 WITNESS my hand and official seal

11 this 20th day of June, 2009.

12

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Nancy Atkins

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1 ERRATA SHEET

2 Deposition of Silvia Wilhelm taken 6/15/09.

3 Line/Page:

4 Reads: Should Read:

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21 \_\_\_\_\_  
Deponent

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23 Sworn to and subscribed before me this \_\_\_\_\_

24 day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2009.

25

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P.O. Box 565207  
Miami, FL 33256-5207  
(305) 235-1199

June 21, 2009

Ms. Silvia Wilhelm  
1925 Brickell Avenue, #17  
Miami, FL 33131

Re: Silvia Wilhelm v. Chris Simmons

Dear Ms. Simmons,

Please be advised that your deposition which was taken in the above-styled cause on June 15, 2009, has been transcribed and is ready for your review.

Please contact us for an appointment to read and sign this deposition at your earliest convenience.

The transcript will be sent to Counsel with or without your signature in 20 days or at the time of trial, whichever comes first.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please feel free to contact us at the above number.

Sincerely,

Nancy Atkins, Court Reporter

cc: Rey Dorta, Esq.  
Bruce Rogow, Esq.