

5-30-1989

## Bolivia: Two U.S. Missionaries Gunned Down In La Paz

John Neagle

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/notisur>

---

### Recommended Citation

Neagle, John. "Bolivia: Two U.S. Missionaries Gunned Down In La Paz." (1989). <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/notisur/3164>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Latin America Digital Beat (LADB) at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in NotiSur by an authorized administrator of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact [amywinter@unm.edu](mailto:amywinter@unm.edu).

## **Bolivia: Two U.S. Missionaries Gunned Down In La Paz**

*by John Neagle*

*Category/Department: General*

*Published: Tuesday, May 30, 1989*

Late on May 24, US missionaries of the Church of Latter Day Saints, Todd Ray Wilson, 19, and Jeffrey Brent Ball, 21, were shot and killed in downtown La Paz. A group calling itself the Zarate Willka Armed Liberation Front, claimed responsibility in written statements distributed to La Paz newspapers. In a statement, the Front said, "The violation of our sovereignty cannot go unpunished. The Yankee invaders who come to massacre our fellow farmers, be warned. We the poor have no other road than to rise up in arms. Our hatred is implacable and our war is to the death." On May 25, police said they had no suspects in the killings. Zarate Willka was a 19th century Indian revolutionary in Bolivia. The group using his name was unknown until it claimed responsibility for an August assassination attempt against US Secretary of State George Shultz during an official visit in La Paz. A bomb exploded near vehicles carrying him, his wife and members of his delegation. Although several vehicles sustained damage, no one was injured. On May 26, Interior Minister Eduardo Perez Beltran said the Front "does not have a political affiliation and one cannot therefore speak of the existence of guerrillas in the country. We are facing something that could also come from the cocaine trade." According to AP, US Embassy officials said the responsibility is not yet clear. Officials claimed the incident was the first case of US citizens being killed by a terrorist or guerrilla group in Bolivia. The two missionaries lived near a Mormon church that was seriously damaged by a bomb in 1988. They arrived a year ago and were working in the Villa Victoria barrio near downtown La Paz. Church officials told AP that about 400 Mormon missionaries are assigned to Bolivia. (Basic data from AP, 05/25/89, 05/26/89)

-- End --