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Mexico City Mayor Announces Dismantlement Of Police Division's Intelligence Directorate

by John Neagle

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At a June 27 meeting with Mexico City police chief Javier Garcia Paniagua, Mayor Manuel Camacho Solis announced the dismantlement of the police division's Intelligence Directorate. Agents and commanders of the directorate have been accused of involvement in torture, extortion, murder and other crimes. Critics blasted President Carlos Salinas de Gortari and Camacho Solis for setting up the directorate last December, and for appointing as its chief, Miguel Nazar Haro, former head of the notorious Federal Security Directorate (DFS). After criticism from Mexican human rights groups over his alleged role in the torture and murder of leftists in the 1970s, Nazar resigned from the Intelligence Directorate, and has not been seen in public since. Many of his old associates at the DFS, disbanded by President Miguel de la Madrid in 1986, formed the core of the Intelligence Directorate. After Nazar quit, Camacho Solis continued to insist on the necessity for an undercover city police force to combat Mexico City's rampant crime, and the Directorate continued to operate. Last week two of the Directorate's commanders, Juventino Prado and Raul Perez Carmona, were detained in connection with the 1984 murder of journalist Manuel Buendia. They had been named by a part-time Intelligence Directorate agent, Juan Rafael Moro Avila, accused of direct involvement in the journalist's slaying. Prado, Perez Carmona and Moro Avila all worked in the DFS for Nazar Haro and later for Jose Antonio Zorrilla Perez, who was charged earlier this month with ordering Buendia's murder. According to daily newspaper Uno Mas Uno (06/27/89), about 350 Directorate agents had failed to show up for work in the previous two weeks. The desertions, said the newspaper, were prompted by the arrests of Prado Hurtado, Perez Carmona and Sofia Anaya Suarez. According to Uno Mas Uno, about 60 agents pertaining to the so-called "Muralla" unit headed by Prado Hurtado, not only quit their jobs, but made off with unregistered foreign-made automobiles assigned to the unit. (Basic data from Notimex, 06/27/89; Uno Mas Uno, 06/27/89; Copley News Service, 06/28/89)

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