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## **New Government Report Support Theory of Single Assassin in Colosio Murder**

*by LADB Staff*

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A new report from the Procuraduria General de la Republica (PGR) in mid-July concludes that a single assassin killed presidential candidate Luis Donaldo Colosio in March 1994. Colosio was gunned down while campaigning in Tijuana (see SourceMex, 03/30/94). The PGR report was based on evidence obtained from its own investigation, plus information provided by other agencies, including the Procuraduria General del Distrito Federal (PGDF), the Secretaria de Defensa Nacional (SEDENA), and the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

All the evidence indicated that both bullets that killed Colosio were fired from the same gun, according to the report. The gun was found in the possession of Mario Aburto Martinez, who remains in custody in a federal penitentiary. Raul Luis Gonzalez Perez, the PGR's special prosecutor in charge of the Colosio investigation, said investigators have discarded all but two of the 27 theories that were developed shortly after Colosio's murder. Gonzalez said the latest conclusions were reached after questioning current and former government leaders, many of whom are members of the governing Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI).

According to Gonzalez, the list includes former president Luis Echeverria Alvarez (1970-1976), former PRI president Santiago Onate, Veracruz Gov. Patricio Chirinos, and former Mexico City mayor Manuel Camacho Solis. In addition, the PGR also questioned Jose Cordoba Montoya, advisor to former president Carlos Salinas de Gortari. Gonzalez Perez made a special point of refuting conclusions reached by his predecessor, Pablo Chapa Bezanilla, who suggested that Colosio's two bullet injuries came from separate weapons.

In addition to disputing Chapa Bezanilla's conclusions, Gonzalez also criticized the "lack of vigor" in the investigations conducted by his other predecessors, Diego Valades, Miguel Montes, and Olga Islas. He said a number of false leads were the result of poor investigative techniques on the part of his predecessors, particularly Chapa Bezanilla.

### ***Investigation to focus on possibility of plot***

The PGR's report was not satisfactory to members of the special legislative commission created to investigate the Colosio assassination. Some members of the commission expressed concern that the PGR would use the latest report to informally close the investigation, thus ending efforts to identify the intellectual authors of Colosio's assassination. But Gonzalez Perez rejected the commission's assertion and pointed out that the PGR has not discarded the possibility that Aburto may have been merely carrying out orders from someone else. Gonzalez said the identification of Aburto as the lone gun only completes one stage of the investigation. "Now we can devote greater resources to explore the possibility that others were involved in planning the assassination," said Gonzalez.

Alfonso Molina Ruibal, chairman of the Colosio commission, accused the PGR of creating obstacles for legislators to question former president Carlos Salinas de Gortari. "The questioning of Salinas would have represented a logical line of investigation, but the PGR did not agree," said Molina, a member of the governing PRI. Meanwhile, commission members Marielena Iris and Heriberto Elizarraga agreed that the PGR is responsible for numerous obstacles in the commission's investigative efforts. According to Elizarraga and Iris, the investigations have been "bogged down" by the PGR's reluctance to allow commission members to review certain PGR files. "On many occasions, we left with our heads hung because we didn't get positive feedback from the PGR and were unable to find answers," said Iris. "As citizens, however, we will continue pressing for the truth." The investigation into Colosio's assassination is expected to continue with the newly elected Congress, which includes a larger number of members of the opposition Partido de la Revolucion Democratica (PRD) and the Partido Accion Nacional (PAN). The newly elected deputies and senators are expected to appoint new members to the Colosio commission.

For his part, Aburto who is serving a 45-year sentence for Colosio's assassination questioned the timing of Gonzalez Perez's report. In an exclusive telephone interview with the Mexico City daily newspaper El Universal, Aburto said the report "attempts to defend certain political interests rather than seeking justice and truth." Jorge Mancillas, a human rights activist and an attorney for the Aburto family, said the PGR has chosen to ignore other evidence that could disprove its theory, such as the possibility that Colosio's wounds were made by two bullets of different caliber. Colosio died from wounds caused by shots to the temple and the area under the rib cage. (Sources: Cronica de Hoy, 07/24/97; La Jornada, Novedades, The News, 07/25/97; El Financiero International, 07/28/97; El Universal, 07/25/97, 07/29/97)

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