The second major political assassinations in six months raised ques-
tions Thursday about the continuing effectiveness of the system that has
kept this nation stable for six
decades.

At the least, the virtual one-party system — which Peruvian writer
Mario Vargas Llosa has called "a per-
fected dictatorship" — seemed less to us
federal police investigated the killing
of yet another prominent figure.

The weapon used to kill Francis-
co Ruíz Massieu — the second-
ranking official in the Institutional
Revolutionary Party, which has
ruled this country for 45 years —
has been traced to a town in the Rio
Grande Valley in Texas, law
enforcement sources said Thursday.

With the help of U.S. authorities,
investigators have determined that
the Intertechn 9-mm submachine pis-
til, a model known as a "Tech 9,
was purchased in the unnamed bor-
city, sources said. But it was not
immediately clear who made the
purchase and when.

As the investigation continued,
Mexican government officials continued
doubts about their political system,
which is shaky and the seeming
impunity of drug dealers, as they
dedicated a funeral for Ruiz Massieu
in the days after the assassination of PRI presidential
candidate Luis Donaldo Colosio,
Ruiz Massieu’s slain heightens
worries that Mexico could be
returning to the days of political
violence that this nation endured in
the 1930s, and which led to the
creation of the PRI as a peaceful way
to broker power struggles.

Ruiz Massieu was fatally shot
Wednesday morning in front of
the downtown hotel as he left a break-
fast for his party’s recently elected
federal deputies.

His body lay in state at party
event headquarters Wednesday evening,
then being moved to a funeral home
in the south of the capital, where a
small group of mourners gathered
Thursday morning, until he was
taken to the Spanish Cemetery for
cremation.

U.S. law enforcement sources
said they found plausible the the-
cration that drug traffickers had killed
Ruiz Massieu to send a message to
his brother, Deputy Attorney Gener-
al Mario Ruiz Massieu. "It’s a good
theory," a U.S. official said. "But
that’s all it is — a theory. Mario
Ruiz has been active in directing
(anti-drug) operations and providing
manpower to go after the cartels."

Any of Mexico's top drug cartels
could have been involved in the
murder, the official said.

Sen. Hollings Holds Up Vote on
GATT, Clinton Braces for Fight

By Ann DeVoy
Peter Behr
THE WASHINGTON POST
WASHINGTON

A week after predicting the Pres-
ident and Congress would work at least
able to take credit for another major
trade pact before adjournment next
week, the Clinton administration
Thursday returned to battle stations
for a post-election fight in the Sen-
ate that is now causing jitters in the
House.

For an administration that has
lived two years at the edge, it was
familiar territory. And this time,
Republicans are not to blame.

Sen. Ernest Hollings, D-S.C.,
ignored personal pleas by Clinton in
private meetings Tuesday at the
White House and opted to set off
the battle that will bring the Senate
into a rare lame duck session at the
effort of the system that has
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U.S. Trade Representative Mick-
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White House, Congressional leaders
and Hollings have now agreed on a
time frame for debate and early
voters on GATT. The inter-
national trade agreement that took
two administrations eight years to
negotiate among 123 countries. It
would reduce tariffs and subsidies
over a 10-year period and has gotten
the votes for the agreement
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