

off-campus classes given during the strike; the acceptance by authorities of responsibility for material "removed" from campus on the eve of the strike; and allocation to the CEU of on-campus office space, cafeterias, and infrastructure. The students also demanded the dropping of charges laid against strikers, and no further charges or reprisals.

The Rector's Office counterproposal offered to lengthen the school year, take no reprisals against CEU members or sympathizers, and lay no responsibility on students for materials and utensils removed by Department heads at the strike's start. The CEU accepted the Rector's Office proposal and ended the strike.

Dr. Carpizo's rectorship has thus introduced new practices into University administration. Consistently rejecting authoritarianism, intolerance and arbitrary behavior, he has made dis-

cussion, conciliation and interchange of ideas the University's instruments for solving controversies. He has, moreover, stimulated change and initiated the transformation of the University. In short, Carpizo has proved an exception among UNAM rectors for democratic attitudes and practices. With him at the helm, and with the dynamism demonstrated by the University community as a whole, the UNAM offers a promising prospect for the future. The intelligence, maturity, and will to change shown by the University allow us to entertain high hopes of it.★

Mario Ruiz Massieu
UNAM Assistant General Secretary

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Towards a University of the Future

Visualizing the University's future is difficult, when for decades the institution has neither been analyzed or discussed, and its development has been strongly shaped by improvisation, leading to its current, problem-laden situation. Outlining a project for the University is further complicated by the times, when our project as a nation, beyond the ups and downs of electoral politics, is threatened and daily suffers disfiguring setbacks.

It's a difficult task, for sure, but an important one, not only for the UNAM community, but for the country as a whole. As elsewhere, the university system in Mexico, and particularly the National University, is one of society's foremost institutions. In our system of large-scale institutions, the UNAM, as part of the role it plays at the center of higher education in the country, has had the double task of both stabilizing and innovating that system. It has insured the success of this dual enterprise through a delicate balance in its policies and by exercising certain controls, in a complex feed-back process responding to supply and demand, to societal pressures, or to be more precise, pressure from some of its quarters, and from the state.

Thus, the University cannot turn exclusively toward the elites, nor can it totally open up to the people. While it has had to limit its own growth, it has also refused to be broken up; it cannot center its activities around criticism of the system, but neither can it become a mere reproducer of it. It has fallen on the University to be and to do simultaneously, and a different situation would mean to risk the loss of the National University as it has been until now.

We should say that for the time being, and

dictionaries aside since they don't register this curious habit of ours, we will continue to speak of "University" when we really mean the UNAM. We know it's not the only university, but nonetheless the destiny of our whole system of higher learning is inter-twined with the UNAM, if only because of its gargantuan size.

It's only natural that this multiplicity of facets and functions should cause tension and upsets within the University, tension that explodes at the first attempt to implement any kind of change directly or indirectly affecting any one of the facets. This is particularly so if the proposed



the draft reform proposal.
September 24: Student council members hold a meeting in the School of Philosophy and Letters. Some 500 students come out against the amendments.
October 20-25: Classes resume. Student meetings held on different UNAM campuses to analyze the amendments.
October 25-30: In Prepas and Sciences and Humanities High Schools (CCHs), students organize for a General Student Assembly called for Oct. 31. On October 27, a mass rally is held on esplanade outside Administration Building. Students demand repeal of amendments to the regulations governing enrollment, exams, and fees. No objection is raised to the other resolutions taken by the University Council.
October 31: Formation of the University Student Council

change is aimed precisely at the least favored sectors of our complicated and heterogeneous community. Events in the University over these last months clearly show that we have different conceptions and visions, sometimes at odds with one another, concerning the University, what it is and what it should be. The urgency of debating, confronting, defending, correcting and enriching these different visions has also become obvious. And it is also clear that the University must pause to review its prospects and its tasks.

But there is another, equally important lesson we have learned throughout this process:

University capable of meeting the demands of the future, teachers, on the other hand, wish to introduce changes, but only in moderation so that the institution doesn't become totally foreign to them.

Thus we tend to develop constraints beyond the concrete limitations imposed on us by our surroundings and by external factors. Tradition, inertia, special interests, prejudice, personal experience, among others, seem to force us into this. How easily we forget that we're up against the task of building the University for future generations. To use Ortega y Gasset's words, we forget that education is preparing, in the



Talks between Rector's Office and CEU representatives.

that discussion allows us to identify common goals and reach points of agreement, at least among those of us who want changes in the University. Starting with the protagonists, and later joined by the spectators who have slowly become a part of the process, everyone has shown a common determination to examine the University. This shared platform of purpose was what made it possible to sit down together last January and confront discrepancies; and it will allow us to continue the debate in the University Congress.

It should be clear, nonetheless, that this initial process will only acquire its full meaning if it leads to the development of a solid philosophy for the University, one capable of guiding its activity and its path to the future, of helping us design new and different alternatives. This demands the intelligence and audacity of the whole community and requires a special effort on the part of academics. While on the one hand youth strives to create a new

present, for future lives. It's time to cast off all ties, to discard prejudice and fears, to turn toward the young who are crying out for real change in the University and to join with them in this collective effort.

In order to reach in-depth agreements concerning the type of University we want, we will first have to agree on a diagnosis of today's university and its conditioning factors. We must also discuss how we see our society's future and how we would want it to be, since the University must contribute to shaping that society while at the same time being a part of it.

Inevitably, our diagnosis must consider the country's growing economic and industrial dependency, a process which is also manifest in education, science, technology and general culture. In response to this situation, an attempt has been made to apply a development model which has actually strengthened the ties of dependency while purportedly seeking to "modernize so we are not left behind." Since

The University must contribute to shaping our society while at the same time being a part of it



Administration Building Tower

(CEU), representing student bodies on 25 UNAM campuses. CEU resolves to fight for repeal of regulation amendments.

November 6: CEU's first off-campus rally. Students march to Administration Building from near-by suburb of San Angel. CEU calls on Rector to engage in a public debate to be held November 11.

November 10: Rector Carpizo appoints a first commission to study CEU demands.

November 12: Meeting between CEU and Rector's Office representatives. Students of CCH No. 6, acting of their own accord, hold a nine-hour sit-in at Administration Building.

November 13: One-day general UNAM shut-down called by CEU. Shut-down complete on 26 campuses, partial on others.

November 18: First negotiating offers made by

this "reflex modernization" needs no other science and technology than what it imports from abroad, it constitutes a serious obstacle to generating home-grown scientific knowledge; it makes creativity and innovation superfluous.

In education we find a gradual encroachment of passive, rote-style learning and increased numbers of technical and professional specialists trained to function within the framework of dependency, and basically in the tertiary sector. And incidentally, these tasks demand little in terms of money and academic resources.

masses are further marginalized from access to culture.

The University's troubled situation inevitably generates tension and contradictions that must be overcome sooner or later either through policies that seek to conciliate the differences or by making a well-grounded choice among the contradictory positions at stake. Our tradition would seem clearly to point in a certain direction: when the arena for the debate is called neither Justo Sierra (its official name) nor Che Guevara (its student-given name), but rather is solomonically referred to as the Auditorium of the School of Philosophy and Let-

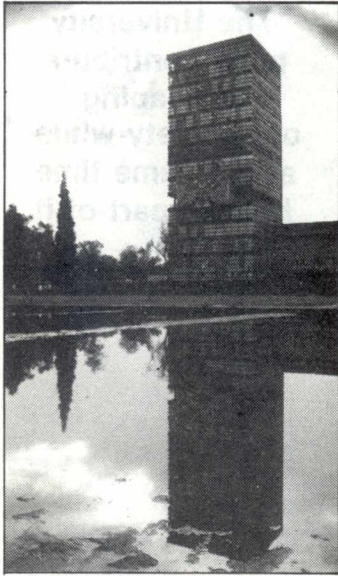


Photo by Rafael Bonilla.

Administration Building Tower.

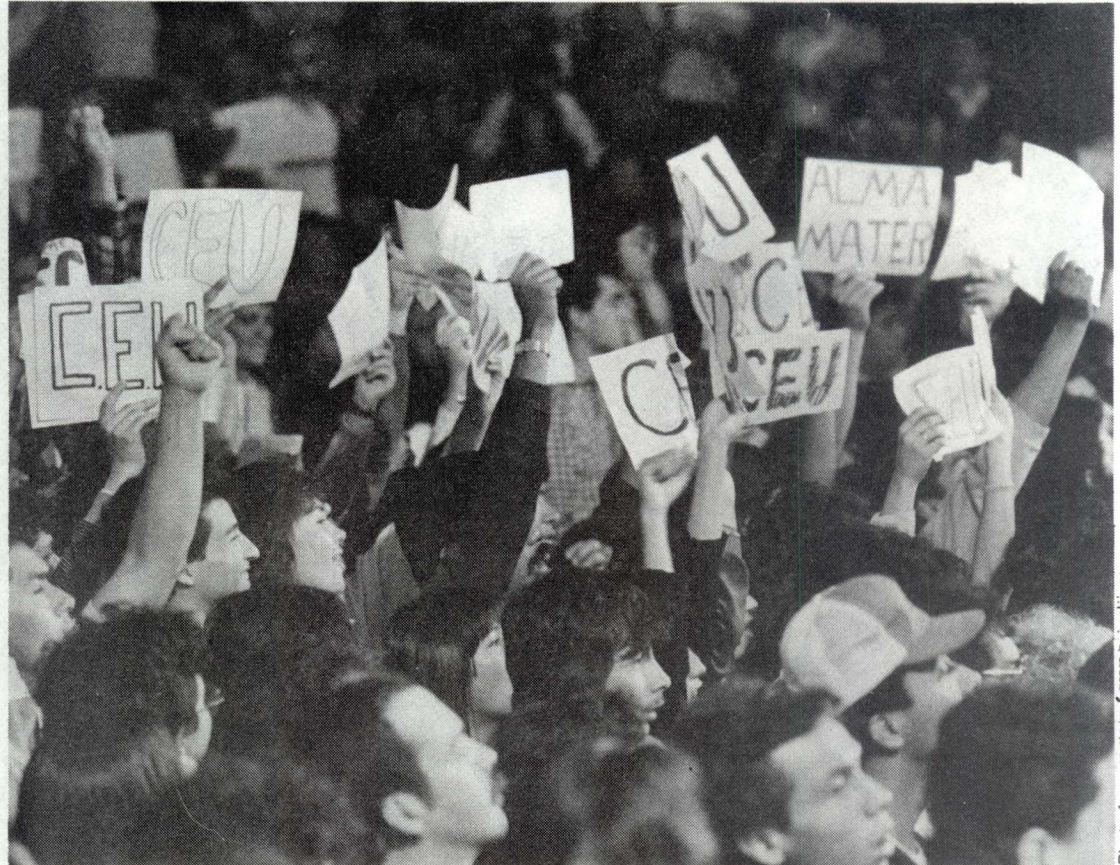


Photo from unomásuno archive.

Public at talks between Rector's Office and CEU reps.

University authorities to the CEU, especially as regards undergraduate level admission qualifications. CEU rejects the overtures.

November 24: Formation of Committee to Promote the Parents' Participation.

November 25: March from Hundido Park to Administration Building. Thousands of members of the University community take part.

November 26-30: In Science and Economics Schools, forums are held in favor of the democratic transformation of the UNAM. Meetings between CEU and Rector's Office representatives still failing to achieve concrete results.

December 5: CEU begins to propose the strike as a pressure tactic to achieve demands. First mention of the proposal which will later become student movement's key demand: the holding of a

To this we must add our country's enormous lag in education and cultural affairs, as well as the clear insufficiency of our system of higher education, even on a Latin American scale. Much has been said, especially in recent times, about the UNAM being a university for the masses. It is no doubt true that the notorious increase in enrollment—which at any rate was slowed a decade ago—led to a certain broadening of the socio-economic and cultural spectrum in the student body. But if the deficiencies inherent in a more heterogeneous student body are not dealt with adequately, then the increase in numbers is neither a sign of greater democracy nor of increased opportunities. Rather, established filters tend to take over and de-massify the university. Even more so than in other Latin American countries, in Mexico the masses are outside the university walls and at present are growing much faster than the institution itself. As the University moves increasingly beyond their reach, the

ters, or with a touch of humor, Che Sierra, we realize that in the best of cases, the effort will be made to conciliate differences. Yet we run the risk of ending up stranded at the half-way mark, forced to sweep our unresolved contradictions under the rug, using the broom of discourse.

At the heart of the debate and in the midst of this sea of contradictions we find the ambivalence that afflicts the University because of its dual nature as an institution at the service of society while at the same time housing critical thought on social issues. Given Mexico's social crisis, this is probably the most serious dilemma facing the University. Because of the very nature of its responsibilities and the way it carries out its assigned role, the University can either work to further dependency or to free the country from it; it can serve certain sectors of society or place itself in the service of society as a whole. The answer to this dilemma will to a great extent determine the Univer-

sity's tasks, its future and its influence on the development of new generations and on a new society.

This is the great challenge facing the University community. Leopoldo Zea said that, "A liberating culture begins at the precise moment when we become conscious of the domination and manipulation our peoples are subjected to." This is the chance to begin a collective process of de-alienating the University so that we can all autonomously contribute to the generation of culture and to social liberation. It is the opportunity to imbue our academic activity with a sense of political purpose, chang-

even come to mind— may become feasible through collective effort. And this is precisely what it's all about, since we are clearly not going to sit down and discuss the obvious, such as whether students need to study more, whether researchers should be represented in the University Council, or if the administration should be less bureaucratic or the University should improve its academic standing.

Within the framework of shared goals and the characteristics of our University project, we will have to analyze the type of education students need and the possible methodologies for providing it; the role of research amongst the



At University Council session: UNAM General Secretary José Narro, Rector Jorge Carpizo and ex-Administrative Secretary Manuel Covarrubias presiding.

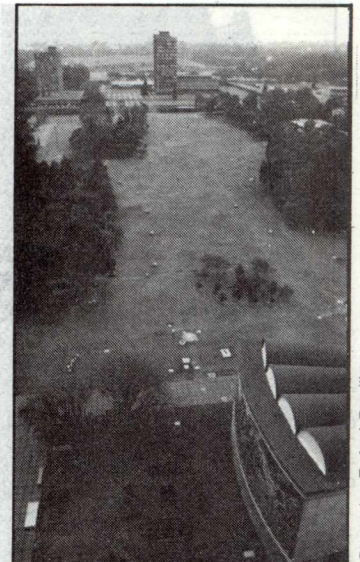


Photo by Rafael Bonilla.

University City campus from the Humanities Tower.

Photo from unoméxico

ing it into an activity that struggles against backwardness and dependency.

This is a moment when we must search for our own scientific style, yet without losing touch with science world-wide; a time to chart our own paths in technological research; a time to recover and to build our own culture, within the framework of universal culture; a time to take up the mutual commitment to work toward a nation-project that is just and independent.

This process of building collective awareness and a commitment to directing our efforts in the directions we've been discussing could well be the first step—and probably the most difficult one—in our discussions leading up to the University Congress. At the same time, it could well provide a solid basis for developing specific proposals for change and a frame of reference for our new University project.

The depth and range of the proposed changes are difficult to foresee because solutions that seem impossible today—or that don't

University's tasks and the necessary reorganization this will require; the mechanism for increasing democracy in the institution's daily life and the precise boundaries for the workings of its governing bodies; the specific mechanisms through which the University will be part of society and in touch with the national situation, and so on.

Rigorous and profound analysis will lead to more creative and innovative solutions and, above all, to solutions that better contribute to forging the University the country needs, thus helping to build the nation-project demanded by our youth.★

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University Congress.
December 11: Student march from Venados Park to Administration Building. CEU gives University Council a January 12 deadline to repeal measures, announces it will call a University-wide strike if deadline not met.
December 12: Rector's Office Commission sends proposal to CEU suggesting a public debate to be held from January 6 to April 15 1987, involving representatives of the CEU, the UNAM Workers' Union (STUNAM), the Autonomous Academic Staff Associations (AAPAUNAM) and University authorities. The CEU gives a January 12 deadline for reaching an agreement.
December 15: CEU and Rector's Office reps reach agreement on a public debate to be broadcast on the UNAM radio station, *Radio Universidad*. The CEU-Rector's Office Special