

Rerun Of '68: The Cast Of Characters

The 'Right' Wing

Guillermo Soberón Acevedo: Ringleader of the right-wing forces, Soberón became head of the National University in the aftermath of the 1973 fall of progressive UNAM rector Pablo González Casanova.

Valentin Molina Pineiro, M.D.: A British-trained doctor, Pineiro is a top-level secretary for Soberón, a post carved out for him in 1972. He is known to have organized right-wing activist networks at UNAM and is personally linked with the fascist Catholic sect known as Opus Dei.

Germán Cabrera Pontón: Professor of Commerce and Administration at UNAM, and one of Soberón's most trusted associates. Known supporter of Chile's fascist dictator Augusto Pinochet, he is the founder of the extreme right-wing paramilitary group known as Movimiento Universitario De Renovadora Orientación (MURO), predecessor of the equally fascist Guardia Unificadora Iberoamericana (GUIA). Both groups arose out of fanatic right-wing Catholic groups and have ties to Monterrey.

The 'Left' Wing

STUNAM: Union of UNAM Workers. This organization, a fusion of the University Workers Union (STEUNAM) and the Union of the Academic Personnel of UNAM (SPAUNAM), is preponderantly controlled by the "Eurocommunist" agent faction of the Mexican Communist Party through its control of the former STEUNAM

leadership. Evaristo Pérez Arreola is the top leader of the PCM faction in the STUNAM leadership; Eleizer Morales heads up a more moderate wing tracing back to the old SPAUNAM.

Raúl Olmedo: Director of the Higher Studies Division of UNAM's School of Political Sciences. Olmedo functions as the radiating center, linked to the U.S.-based "left" think-tank, the Institute for Policy Studies, of terrorist and drug-running operations under a "left intellectual" cover. He has considerable influence on a variety of left groupings, including the PCM.

Frente Popular Revolucionario (FPR): The Popular Revolutionary Front — a leading "Jacobin" element in the UNAM conflict — has been identified by the terrorist 23rd of September League as its "mass organization." The League is widely acknowledged to be an arm of U.S. intelligence services, and has taken responsibility for scores of murders and kidnappings over the past five years. The FPR was created from the remnants of the Popular Independent Front (FPI), an anarchist populist grouping based in the slums around greater Mexico City and heavily linked to the 23rd League. The FPI, in turn, was created by the CIA through the ultra-left group involved in the now defunct Mexican pro-terror magazine *Por Qué*, which played a major role in the 1968 disturbances.

The Mexican Communist Party (PCM): A "Eurocommunist", pro-terrorist wing led by Central Committee member Valentin Campa is presently hegemonic in the Party. THE PCM's predominant control over the STUNAM is self-acknowledged, as is its willingness to use the university strike to derail the government's Political Reform.

The Plot Against The López Portillo Government: A Chronology

August 24, 1976: UNAM Rector Soberón suddenly proposes a major change in labor legislation which dates back to the 1917 Constitution. Labelled by media as the "Soberón Law," it calls for amending existing labor legislation to include a third category — Section C — under which university labor organizing would be restricted and university workers isolated from workers in the public and private sectors. As intended, the proposal touches off a national outcry, with left and rightwing spokesmen debating the issue through the mass media. One month later, Interior Minister Mario Moya Palencia, top representative of the right in the Echeverría cabinet and known for ties to both left and right-wing terrorists, gives his support to the "Soberón Law." He also calls for abridging the concept of "university autonomy," the doctrine which puts the university off-limits to police, army or direct

government interference.

Nov. 1: President Echeverría's government forces an eleventh hour settlement with the STEUNAM over salary increases. Soberón had previously made intransigent statements on the strike, coinciding with a national right-wing campaign of economic warfare and rumor-mongering against Echeverría.

Dec. 1: José López Portillo is inaugurated as President of Mexico.

Jan. 8, 1977: Right-wing goon squads take over the University of the state of Oaxaca, previously controlled by Mexican Communist Party ultraleftists. The violent incident gives the PCM the pretext to call a nation-wide mobilization of universities to protest the fascist move. Throughout January and February the PCM continues violent clashes with fascist paramilitary groups, actions which give momentum

to right-wing demands for the resignation of all progressive members of the Government, supposedly sponsoring a "Communist plot." The new Interior Minister, Jesús Reyes Heróles, makes efforts to pacify both sides of the conflict. The Government ousts the fascist governor of the state March 23 and imposes a settlement on the University, after more than 30 deaths.

Jan. 31: The escalating provocations of the PCM give right-wing labor leader tied to the CIA, Fidel Velázquez, a pretext to "predict" that López Portillo's government is going to be faced with a "problem of the magnitude" of 1968. Right-wing spokesmen immediately back Velázquez's warnings.

Feb 6: The SPAUNAM, not legally recognized as a union and without a contract, merges with the STEUNAM, which does hold a legal contract. The resulting hybrid STUNAM falls between existing labor law. Soberón refuses to recognize the new union, demanding instead his "Section C." STUNAM postpones two strike deadlines, one in early February and the other in late March, before deferring strike action to June 20.

March: Right-wing goons and PCM counterparts try to expand the bloody conflict of Oaxaca to the universities of the states of Zacatecas and Guerrero. Interior Minister Reyes Heróles moves in to force solutions to the staged scenarios.

April 2: Reyes Heróles announces the government's program of "Political Reform."

Mid-May: In response to the extension of the Political Reform proposal to the universities, Rector Soberón warns that such "intervention" is "harmful" while Raúl Olmedo revealingly laments that the involvement of parties other than left and right sectlets will put an end to the "class struggle" on campus.

June 20: UNAM is paralyzed by the STUNAM strike. Soberón refuses to negotiate. PCM leaders announce that 20 other state universities are ready to strike in support of STUNAM, threatening to touch off violent confrontations throughout the country. Soberón publishes a two-page paid ad in all the national newspapers warning that the conflict will be "long and hard." He orders gas and electricity to be turned off in university buildings, wrecking all experiments underway in scientific laboratories.

June 22: The government linked daily *El Nacional* issues an unprecedented attack against the Mexican Communist Party, labeling the PCM "reactionary," "subversive," and "provocateur" for its role in the UNAM conflict. Spokesmen for the ruling PRI party and for the Congress debunk any legal basis for the STUNAM strike and call for a legislative solution to the conflict.

June 23: The PCM attempts to link the UNAM strike to wildcat construction strikes in the petroleum sector and other labor hotspots. Two state universities are reported ready to strike in solidarity with STUNAM, while the number of universities the PCM threatens to mobilize on solidarity strikes jumps up to 35. Arnoldo

Martínez Verdugo, PCM Secretary-General tells reporters that the UNAM strike will test the Political Reform. Right-wing spokesmen begin calling for military intervention to quell the strike.

June 27: The Televisa network tied to the Monterrey Group and ex-president Miguel Alemán begin broadcast of classes which Soberón has arranged off campus. The National Conciliation and Arbitration Board declares that the strike is illegal; right-wing spokesmen step up demands that the government use "public force" to dislodge the strikers.

June 29: López Portillo, in his first public comments on the strike, tells foreign newsmen that he is willing to settle the STUNAM labor dispute through either "Section A" or "Section B," if the "waters become calm" — interpreted as a call for the strikers to pull back. He significantly does not indicate support for Soberón's Section C.

STUNAM support march, headed by Valentin Campa of the PCM, draws 10-15,000 to a rally where speakers promise "we will make this the hottest summer ever."

The "General Staff" of "The Organization" (an extreme right front group) calls for the creation of a Mexican "Triple A" — the Interpol-connected death squads already operating in Argentina, Italy and Spain — to "take justice in our own hands" in the university strike.

June 30: Soberón repudiates López' implicit settlement offer with a reaffirmation of the need for Section C.

July 1: Rumors — soon proved false — circulate in Mexico City that the army has been called out to smash the strike.

Soberón files charges with the federal Attorney General's office against the STUNAM leadership for destruction of property. He sets deadline of noon July 2 for strikers to return to work or be fired.

Pérez Arreola for the STUNAM says the union is "stronger than ever." The FPR moves into higher profile among the strikers.

July 3: Cabrera Pontón, Soberón's organizer among right-wing faculty, calls for the police to lay siege to the campus and starve the strikers out.

July 4: Soberón begins hiring to replace fired strikers. There is violence at some hiring sites. He rejects a mediation offer from the neutral University of Nuevo León, which the STUNAM has accepted.

Unidentified assailants hold respected left economist Alonso Aguilar at gunpoint while his personal papers are destroyed.

July 6: STUNAM support march draws 100,000 to downtown rally. STUNAM leaders are arrested as they leave the rally.

July 7: Unarmed police units dislodge strikers from the university. Soberón re-possesses the campus. The government makes no official statement. Pérez Arreola declares "the strike continues."

July 8: All 35 state universities prepare for 24-hour protest strike; Mexico City's Politecnico meets to decide on "indefinite" support strike.