

AN IAU-IAUP SYMPOSIUM

***UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY AND
ACADEMIC FREEDOM:***

***A PERSPECTIVE FROM LATIN
AMERICA AND THE USA***

By Alvaro Romo

CONFUSION ABOUT THE MEANING OF UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY AND ACADEMIC FREEDOM

- **POLYSEMY DERIVED FROM DIVERSE
HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL
CIRCUMSTANCES**
- **DIFFERENT AND EVEN OPPOSING
IDEOLOGICAL POSITIONS**

EMERGENCE OF AUTONOMY MOVEMENT IN LATIN AMERICA

- **NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF CORDOBA,
ARGENTINA, 1918**
- **OTHER FACTORS: FIRST WORLD WAR
AND SOCIALIST SOVIET REVOLUTION**

WHAT WERE THE STUDENTS AFTER?

1. **“CO-GOVERNANCE”**
2. **“FREEDOM OF TEACHING” = RIGHT TO
SELECT FACULTY**
3. **“PARALLEL CHAIRS” = OPTIONS TO
CHOOSE SUBJECTS**
4. **“UNIVERSITY EXTENSION” = ABANDON
“IVORY TOWER” CONCEPT**

NOTE SEMANTIC CHANGE:

- **FROM “FREEDOM OF TEACHING” AS SELECTION PROCESS TO “FREEDOM OF TEACHING” AS THE RIGHT OF PROFESSORS TO TEACH WITHOUT COERTION TO FOLLOW A GIVEN LINE OF THOUGHT OR IDEOLOGY.**
- **“LIBERTAD DE CATEDRA”**

CHANGING POSTURES OF GOVERNMENTS IN LATIN AMERICA

- FROM TOTAL DISREGARD OF AUTONOMY AND ACADEMIC FREEDOM TO A RESPECTFUL POSITION, DEPENDING ON IDEOLOGY
- MEXICO, 1930's: AN OPENLY PRO-MARXIST-LENINIST POSITION LED TO THE CREATION OF THE FIRST PRIVATE UNIVERSITY IN 1935

UNREST AND DISSENT

- **UNAM STRIKE FROM APRIL 20, 1999 TO FEBRUARY 6, 2000**
- **REASON: RECTOR BARNES' PROPOSAL TO RAISE TUITION TO \$ 68 DOLLARS PER SEMESTER**

ISSUES OF FINANCES

- **SUBSIDY FROM THE STATE**
- **THE QUESTION OF ACCOUNTABILITY**
- **THE PRESSURE OF INCREASING DEMAND**
- **THE GROWTH OF PRIVATE EDUCATION: IN BRAZIL, CHILE AND COLOMBIA PRIVATE EDUCATION HAS BECOME DOMINANT**

THE ISSUES OF PERTINENCE AND QUALITY

- **ROLE OF THE STATE IN QUALITY ASSURANCE WITHOUT INTRUDING IN THE INSTITUTION'S AUTONOMY**
- **QUALITY: PUBLIC versus PRIVATE?**
- **AN INTERESTING DEVELOPMENT IN CHINA: 318 "INDEPENDENT COLLEGES"**

CHANGES IN PROGRESS

- **NEW MECHANISMS FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN LATIN AMERICA**
- **INTEREST IN DEVELOPING A LATIN AMERICAN REGION ACCREDITATION OR EQUIVALENCE PROCESS**

THE ISSUE OF PERTINENCE

- **CAPACITY TO BE RESPONSIVE TO EXPECTATIONS AND NEEDS OF SOCIETY**
- **RESPONSE TO MARKET SHOULD NOT BECOME A DEPENDENCE**
- **IAUP DECLARATION**

USA REALITY

- **HIGH QUALITY AND POOR QUALITY INSTITUTIONS COEXIST**
- **NO MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**
- **ACCREDITATION MOSTLY HANDLED BY PRIVATE AGENCIES**
- **LEARNING OUTCOMES WILL BE CONSIDERED**

CONTRAST

- **LATIN AMERICA REBELLED AGAINST NAPOLEONIC MODEL**
- **USA MODEL IS COMPLETELY DIFFERENT IN TERMS OF GOVERNANCE AND ACADEMIC TRADITION**

PACE

BASIC PRINCIPLES SUPPORTING AUTONOMY:

- **FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION**
- **FREEDOM TO DISSEMINATE INFORMATION**
- **FREEDOM TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AND
DISTRIBUTE KNOWLEDGE**

ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND AUTONOMY

- **IMPLY TRUST IN UNIVERSITIES**
- **HAVE AS PRECONDITIONS
ACCOUNTABILITY, TRANSPARENCY
AND QUALITY ASSURANCE**

CHALLENGES

BURNING ISSUES SUCH AS:

- **STEM-CELL RESEARCH IN THE USA**
- **PROVIDING ACCESS TO MILLIONS IN LATIN AMERICA WHILE PROVIDING QUALITY ASSURANCE**

IMPERATIVES

- **PROTECT HUMAN RIGHTS AND CIVIL LIBERTIES IN A CONTEXT OF CONFLICT**
- **ASSOCIATIONS OF UNIVERSITIES MUST WORK TOGETHER**
- **IAUP MOTTO**
- **NOT “SI VIS PACEM PARA BELLUM” BUT “IF YOU WANT PEACE, EDUCATE FOR PEACE”**