

Mexico's National Archive Discloses Documents on 1968 Movement

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The General Archive of the Nation (AGN), the National Transparency Institute (INAI) and the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) declassified its documents on the 1968 student movement, as society and institutions are honoring its successes and martyrs after 50 years.

The AGN released its documents as part of an effort to shed light on the movement, violently repressed by the government of Gustavo Diaz Ordaz and Luis Echeverria.

During the ceremony in which the disclosure was announced, the director of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) Enrique Graue and the future Human Rights deputy secretary Alejandro Encinas, along with members of the student movement and the 68 Committee, demanded the National Defense Secretary (Sedena) do the same. "We're here today to celebrate the opening of the archives in the hands of the AGN regarding the events of 1968, and we hope to be soon at the Sedena also celebrating the opening of those archives," said Graue. "It will give us the opportunity to piece things together, correct injustices and avoid the tragic events of that year to repeat."

Encinas also said that Mexico's intelligence services and the Presidential Guard, both of which will disappear in the future government of Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, should also release its documents and hand them over to the AGN. The announcement was made at the iconic Lecumberri Palace, a political prison where many of the student leaders of the 1968 movement (and certainly others) ended up.

"The right to memory and truth is useful not to foster vengeance, but to know the facts and do justice, as a beginning point to repair the damage done and avoid these events," said Encinas. "It's been very difficult to overcome the old ways of managing information... and turn them at the service of society."

The disclosed archive including photographs of marches and protests, lists of victims, fingerprints records, cartoons, propaganda, banners, police reports, interviews and activists' political profiles collected by the Political



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and Social Investigations Institute and the Federal Security Institute. Some of the items belong to other archives that have not been fully released yet due protection of 'sensitive information.'

The documents were added to the "M68 Collection: Citizenship in Movement" at the Tlatelolco University Cultural Center (CCUT), which now has over 100 thousand digital items of Mexico's social movements since 1968. The collection project has been promoted by the UNAM and several educational institutions of the country have taken part in it.

"If the history of humanity is the history of human rights, the movement of 68 is an enblem of our fight for an egalitarian participative society," Janine M. Otalora.

The director of the INAI, Francisco Javier Acuña, said the decision was made taking into account society's interest to know the truth and have access to information regarding the student movement, a greater end than protecting personal information.

The undisclosed archive is especially relevant this year, on the 50 anniversary of the movement, as Mexico's Executive Commission of Assistance to Victims declared the massacre of Tlatelolco was a state crime.

On October 2, 1968, a student march ended in a political meeting at the Three Cultures Square, in Tlatelolco, central Mexico City. The demonstration was running peacefully when the students saw flares and heard gunshots coming from surrounding buildings. Hundreds of people died on that night.

"This recognition emphasizes the right of victims to start a repairing process for their damage against their liberty and the lives lost, and represents a further step in the way of the justice we all demand," said Graue.

Encinas, who will take into his new position starting December, said that the future government of Lopez Obrador will bring important changes in the government's transparency and that still classified archives will be opened.

Page 2 of 2