

themselves in politics.

EPG: I have always said that the professors ought to belong to a political party; that the students must have their political ideas, but they must not engage in politics within the University.

When the teacher engages in politics within the University, he not only converts himself into a politician but also ceases to be a good teacher; when the students try to [p. 561] engage in politics in the University, they cease studying, become lazy and apathetic, and engage in agitation.

This is observed in all the universities, especially in those of Mexico. Nevertheless, this has been diminishing rapidly; now the University is a center of learning.

The University ought to be a center of learning where all the philosophies are taught so that the student can leave with knowledge about all political, religious, and philosophical systems; but it must not be a center of agitation. Mexico has gradually achieved educational improvement since university autonomy was granted.

Since it has ceased to depend on the government, now it has more liberty, and it has more room for development.

When it depended on the government, the Secretary of Public Education was the one who determined everything; now it is the University Council, as I say, composed of the best teachers of Mexico, and it is assumed that those professors have the patriotism and sufficient ability to direct the government of the University.

JWW: Previously, I have read--I believe it was

Baltasar Dromundo,¹³⁸ who wrote that he belonged to the generation of 1929 and that that generation had the ingenuity to ask you for the autonomy of the University--that the university autonomy was not your idea.

EPG: The students did not ask me for the autonomy of the University; they limited themselves to asking me for that, which I have just said. Dromundo himself knows very well, because he has said it publicly, that they did not ask for autonomy, but it was offered to them by the President of the Republic. All the students of that epoch know very well that they did not ask for the autonomy; it was the federal Executive who granted it to them.

JWW: And the same generation of 1929 has said that they, who lived in that generation, wanted to put an end to callismo and they placed themselves on the side of *vasconcelismo*.¹³⁹

EPG: The *vasconcelista* movement was important within the University; but it did not come to have a majority of the students. All of the University students went on strike because of police brutality; but the immense majority were not *vasconcelistas*. Of course there was a certain *vasconcelista* faction inside of the University which agitated the student body; but, I repeat, the majority of the students were not *vasconcelistas*. There was a numerous group, directed by intelligent, brave, agitators, who desired that the University declare itself *vasconcelista*. They never achieved this.

¹³⁸ see Baltasar Dromundo, *Los Oradores de 29* (México, D.F.: Ediciones "Una Generación," 1939), quoted in Siegrist Clamont, *En Defensa de la Autonomía Universitaria*, pp. 298-304.

¹³⁹ The terms *callismo* and *vasconcelismo* suggest the personalist nature of Mexican politics of the Portes Gil era; *callismo* refers to the political ideals and practices of Calles, while the term *vasconcelismo* encompasses the same for Vasconcelos.

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