

Mexican Senator Freed in Shootout

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MEXICO CITY, Sept. 8 (AP) — The Mexican army fought a gunfight that left "numerous casualties" and freed Sen. Ruben Figueroa and four aides kidnaped 3½ months ago, Minister of Defense Hermenegildo Cuenca Diaz reported tonight.

Security officials had searched for weeks through the hills of south central Mexico for Figueroa and the guerrilla group that was believed to be holding him.

The Ministry of Defense said guerrilla leader Lucio Cabanas "either escaped or he was not there" during the gunfight. A communique said most of the casualties were among the guerrillas, but it said two of the freed men also were wounded. Many guerrillas were arrested, the communique said.

The guerrilla movement led by Cabanas, a former schoolteacher, has made him a folk hero in Guerrero state, south of Mexico City. The government has estimated that he commanded about 40 heavily armed men.

Cabanas had demanded arms, \$4 million in cash and freedom for every prisoner in Guerrero as Figueroa's ransom. President Luis Echeverria, whose government refuses to deal with kidnapers, rejected the demands and sent in the army to look for the senator.

Last night, Echeverria's frail, 83-year-old father-in-law was freed by kidnapers. He was reported in good condition today.

Jose Guadalupe Zuno Hernandez was released on a street corner in downtown Guadalajara after being held for 10 days after he was abducted.

Zuno said, "From the very beginning my captors treated me well.

"They gave me everything I wanted. They gave me my medicines, and I talked with them about philosophy, humanism. They listened to me."

He said he had rebuked them, saying, "Boys, this is not the way to make your ideas known. Not by going around scaring families."

He added, "They are clean-living boys, they're good boys, but they're mixed up. They want to change the world but they don't know how to do it."

Zuno said he convinced his kidnapers their real enemy was the CIA and not the Mexican government. "These men are fighting against the CIA because the CIA and capitalism do not have respect for anything," Zuno said. "I back them in that struggle, because we have to fight these elements."

A family spokesman said Zuno returned home "unshaven and tired, but well."

His son Ruben told newsmen his father was "very hungry. The first thing he did was ask for something to eat. He is alive and well and in good condition."

He said no deals were made with the kidnapers. "He was just set free."

Zuno was kidnaped Aug. 28 by four gunmen near the downtown area of Guadalajara, Mexico's second-largest city, 300 miles west of Mexico City.

The People's Armed Revolutionary Front, a Marxist group, claimed responsibility for the kidnaping and demanded a \$1.6 million ransom plus release of 10 political prisoners. The government rejected the demands, and a family spokesman said none of the ransom demands had been met.

Police said the People's Front is the same organization which kidnaped U.S. Consul General Terrance G. Leonard on May 4, 1973.

Guadalajara, with a population of 1.7 million, including an estimated 15,000 retired Americans, has been a hot bed of guerrilla activity for the past three years.

*Not in early editions
radio reports, etc*