

Lopez Obrador reaches out to Mexican ruling elite

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Andrés Manuel Lopez Obrador of Mexico's bourgeois liberal National Regeneration Party (MORENA) last week brightly displayed his class stripes in guaranteeing unconditional amnesty to all those in power if he is elected President of Mexico in 2018.

At a conference on August 11, Lopez Obrador assured “the members of the group in power, despite the great damage they have caused the people and the nation, we bear them no ill will and we assure them, before their possible election defeat in 2018, that there will be no reprisals or persecution of anyone. We declare this anticipated amnesty because what is needed is justice, not vengeance.”

This offer clearly extends beyond the every-day cronyism and corruption, such as that involving payment for the Mexico City mansion of President Enrique Peña Nieto's wife, and the award, of a lucrative contract to build a high speed rail line to one of Nieto's cronies, but also to involvement of government officials in brutal acts of violence and their coverup, such as the disappearance and likely murder by the army and police of the Ayotzinapa 43 teaching students in September 2014 in Guerrero state, and the recent shooting by federal police of protesting teachers at Nochistlán in Oaxaca state.

There will be no investigations or prosecutions of such criminal activity. This from the *politico* whose main political plank consists of decrying the corruption he describes as a “mafia in power” dedicated to plundering Mexico, and promising an end to impunity for such misconduct.

Andrés Manuel Lopez Obrador stressed that his movement is not against those who “commit to invest, create jobs, earn legitimate profits, and to the development of Mexico,” but rather only to those who

“amass great fortunes overnight—supported by illegality, and influence peddling—in the shadow of public power.”

This is a clear signal to longstanding Mexican billionaires such as Carlos Slim Helú, the world's second richest man, and Emilio Azcárraga Jean, the Mexican media magnate, that their domination of Mexico will continue on unimpeded.

In fact, Lopez Obrador is viewed by sections of the Mexican financial elite as a Mexican Bernie Sanders: The most viable means to contain the Mexican masses should they step up their rejection of a capitalist system that is sucking them dry.

Along these same lines Lopez Obrador sweet talks the teachers' movement engaged in a prolonged work stoppage in southern Mexico so as to disarm it. For the last two months he has been calling for teachers to resolve their differences at the negotiating table with the government, without demanding as a precondition abrogation of Peña Nieto's education “reform” law, legislation that is aimed at privatizing education, driving down teacher pay, depriving education workers of any independence in teaching methods, and placing on them, and on parents of students, the burden of the lack of sufficient government expenditure on education, particularly in poorer states.

Talks between the National Committee of Education Workers (CNTE), a dissident wing of the National Education Workers Union (SNTE), and the Education Ministry have gone precisely nowhere because the government is intransigent. The government has fired thousands of teachers and withheld the salaries of teacher in Chiapas state, since May.

The CNTE, allied dissident sections of the SNTE, and other teachers continue to block roads and government building in Michoacán, Guerrero, Oaxaca, Chiapas and

other southern states. They have threatened to ramp up that activity, for example, by blocking the highway in Chiapas state leading from the border crossing from Guatemala.

In response President Peña Nieto said in a Televisa interview on Tuesday that "the government of the Republic will have no qualms about applying the use of force" when the "path of dialogue" has been exhausted with the CNTE. He emphasized that the education reform would not be canceled, and that the dialogue with teachers is limited to "hearing their complaints."

Students are scheduled to return to school from summer vacation on Monday. Many teachers will continue their work stoppage. Clashes are inevitable, especially in light of Peña Nieto's less than veiled threat. Teachers also continue to face dismissal for not showing up at classes.

It is clear that Lopez Obrador is simply another representative of more nationalistic sections of the Mexican bourgeoisie, with a base in well to do sections of the middle class. Such elements are in the main focused on identity politics and environmental issues, at the expense of the largely impoverished working class.

The Mexican working class can have no confidence in any political representative of the bourgeoisie, including the fake "left" Morena party. It can only protect its interests through building an independent political movement based on a socialist, anti-capitalist program, uniting its struggles with the working classes throughout the Americas, including in the United States, who face the same concerted attacks by their ruling financial oligarchies.

Nor should teachers maintain illusions that their union leaders, dissident or not, will conduct a serious fight for their interests. Decades of corruption under former long-time SNTE head Elba Esther Gordillo show that union leaders will feather their own nests and capitulate to the powers that be, despite sometime militant rhetoric or action.



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