

Biden advances US interests and attack on immigrants at North American summit

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President Biden visited Mexico City on Monday and Tuesday to meet with President Andrés Manuel López Obrador of Mexico and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau of Canada at the North American Leaders' Summit in Mexico's capital city.

While the stated topics of discussion at the gathering included economic partnership and cooperation, stopping drug and human trafficking, promotion of clean energy and addressing the humanitarian crisis at the US-Mexico border, the agenda subordinated all of these issues to the strategic interests of US imperialism, with Canada playing a supporting role.

The relationship of Mexico to the US emerged at the very beginning of the meetings when López Obrador told Biden at a Monday session in the National Palace, “End with this forgetfulness, this abandonment, this disdain toward Latin America and the Caribbean.”

Of course, the Mexican President made his fundamentally truthful description of the treatment of the countries in the region by the US—arising from more than a century of imperialist economic exploitation, support for brutal dictatorships and military intervention—not because he was planning to actually do anything about it. Instead, the bourgeois nationalist López Obrador followed up his comment by pleading with Biden, saying to the American leader, “you hold the key in your hand.”

For his part, Biden responded by boasting about the paltry “tens of billions of dollars” the US had invested in Latin America over the past fifteen years, including donating more than any other country globally. First of all, any investment made in Latin America is aimed at preserving US interests and maintaining corporate control over the natural and labor resources of the region.

For example, a program of private investment

announced by Vice President Kamala Harris last June—including pledges totaling approximately \$3.2 billion—was to be made in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras as part of the Biden administration's strategic effort to reduce migration to the US from these oppressed and impoverished countries. The companies offering up investment include clothing manufacturers such as Gap, Inc., whose executives are warming their hands over an opportunity to employ as many as 500,000 women and girls in their sweatshop factories at poverty wages.

Biden arrived in Mexico on Sunday evening following a stop in El Paso, Texas where he had a friendly chat with Republican Governor of Texas, Greg Abbott, a leading proponent of anti-immigrant policies in the US. The President did not go to the US town that borders Ciudad-Juárez to speak with migrant workers and their families and learn about the reasons they decided to make the dangerous journey to the US. He went there to show that the Democratic Party and the White House are adopting the closed border policies of the xenophobic right and Biden's fascistic predecessor Donald Trump.

Biden's trip is the first by a US president to Mexico since 2014. Since that time, there has been a dramatic rise in the number of migrants arriving at the border seeking entry into America under asylum rules. In 2022, a record number of more than 2.3 million migrants were arrested at the US border, up from 1.7 million in 2021, a large number of whom were returned to Mexico or their home country under Title 42 public health expulsion provisions.

Title 42 was invoked during the Trump administration, which exploited the coronavirus pandemic as a means of blocking asylum seekers from coming into the US legally until their cases could be

reviewed by immigration authorities. The Biden administration has used Title 42 to carry out the exact same policy as Trump, while claiming that they are opposed to it.

In the week before the summit, Biden announced a new exclusion policy migrants arriving from Nicaragua, Cuba and Venezuela not covered by Title 42 because these regimes do not have repatriation agreements with Washington.

While the future of Title 42 expulsions are uncertain—it has been temporarily upheld by the Supreme Court as it is being reviewed by the court, with a ruling expected later this year—the Democrats are seeking additional means of blocking migrants from entering the US.

With these considerations in mind, Biden’s discussions with López Obrador were to demand that Mexico actively stop migrants from coming to the US border. According to a CNN report, “Homeland Security officials have repeatedly stressed coordination with Mexico in efforts to stem the flow of migration to the US-Mexico border through patrols and sharing of information.” An unnamed Homeland Security official said Biden was going to Mexico “to reinvigorate those discussions.”

Using coded language in his closing remarks at the summit, Biden made clear that the US expects Mexico to support the intensification of the attacks on immigrant workers and their families. He talked about the expansion of “safe and legal pathways for immigrants from Nicaragua, Cuba and Haiti” to enter the US. This policy means that workers who are leaving their home countries because of desperate economic conditions must stay where they are.

Biden also thanked López Obrador, “for stepping up to receive into Mexico those not following the lawful pathways we’ve made available, instead of attempting to unlawfully cross the border between our countries.”



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