

DSA backs Morena's re-election in Mexico: A dry run for endorsing Biden

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16 April 2024

The Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) held a webinar last Wednesday on the Mexican presidential elections, promoting the campaign of Claudia Sheinbaum, the protégée of President Andrés Manuel López Obrador, known as AMLO.

The DSA called for its supporters to campaign and vote for Sheinbaum, although only about 1 percent of the 12 million potential Mexican voters in the United States are registered for the June 2 elections.

The genuine focus of the discussion, however, was not so much Mexico, but how to replicate in the United States the electoral success of Morena, the party led by AMLO that controls both houses of Congress and almost three-fourths of state governments.

While the DSA has not officially endorsed Joe Biden in the US elections, the support for Morena is a dry run for joining the Democratic Party's re-election campaign.

Alina Duarte, a Mexican journalist and teacher at the Political Formation Institute of Morena, began by warning that the pseudo-left will have to rely less on identity politics since the party is "conservative on feminist issues," and the right-wing Strength and Heart for Mexico coalition is exploiting the gender and indigenous background of its candidate Xóchitl Gálvez in the campaign.

"They are trying to make this election something out of identity politics, but we need to see it on the basis of class analysis," she said. Sheinbaum and Gálvez "represent different interests" and "two national projects," Duarte continued. She argued that Gálvez represents the "oligarchy with the full support of the United States," while Morena represents the working class, including the "30 million receiving social programs" created under AMLO.

Kurt Hackbarth, a writer for *Jacobin*, a magazine associated with the DSA, spoke next. He described the Mexican president as a "once-in-a-lifetime, charismatic politician" of "unrepeatable quality," praising his "way of turning a phrase, using vocabulary," as well as his working class background. (AMLO's parents were store owners.)

Explaining Morena's electoral success, Hackbarth said,

"AMLO ran as an anti-corruption candidate with clear message discipline," successfully bringing back to the "left" an issue long used by the right wing. Moreover, AMLO leads a "broad coalition" and "has done enough to keep the center and left happy." As an example, he cited limited social welfare programs, supplementary pensions and minimum wage hikes, as well as the decision to pay exorbitant prices for buying power plants from transnationals like Iberdrola.

Hackbarth applauded Sheinbaum's own record as head of Mexico City's government and her promises regarding the continuation of social programs, minimum wage hikes and "green" projects. "It has been a very disciplined campaign," he added.

Overall, the event centered upon numerous propaganda points portraying Morena as a "mass party" and "broad front" that represents the working class and that should be supported unconditionally. However, this requires ignoring the party's historical origins and international context, as well as its most consequential policies under AMLO.

There was no mention, for instance, that López Obrador was a leading member of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) that ruled Mexico for seven decades and the Party for Democratic Revolution (PRD), both of which now belong to the right-wing opposition. Morena is itself mainly staffed by former officials from the traditional establishment and was created to offer a new façade for the same bourgeois interests to continue ruling.

There was also no mention of the unprecedented militarization of the country under AMLO, Mexico's participation in US war games or his massive corporate tax cuts. The COVID-19 pandemic was treated as a "blow the world threw" at Mexico, not mentioning AMLO's early adoption of Trump's "herd immunity" policy, placing profits over human lives, which has resulted in over 700,000 excess deaths in the country.

Spurred by comments from attendees, Hackbarth lamented that Sheinbaum "has not mentioned Palestine," while making clear this did not affect his optimism regarding her

future government.

The historic onslaught against impoverished migrants under Morena would have also gone unmentioned had it not been raised by this reporter in a written question.

“Migrants don’t vote”

In response, Hackbarth gave an anecdote of riding a bus in southern Mexico that was stopped three or four times at migration checkpoints, where anyone who looked Central American was asked for papers and taken off. He did not mention that these migrants face nightmarish uncertainty.

Most often the soldiers—tens of thousands of whom are on “migrant containment” duty—or other officials detain the migrants to send them back to the southern border of Mexico or deport them. Numerous human rights reports have documented troops handing migrants over to gangs to be extorted, robbed, raped, tortured, forcibly recruited or even disappeared.

Hackbarth said: “Early on, [AMLO] came to the decision to concede on migration to keep the US off their backs to advance on the domestic front. ... He made a realpolitik decision to sacrifice on the migration issue. The cynical conclusion: because migrants don’t vote.”

The moderator of the event, Luisa Martinez, a DSA Political Committee member, then interjected that, as someone who had long been an undocumented immigrant, “I understand the political situation. These are the types of issues the left confronts when it is in power.”

The argument that it is justifiable to agree to any fascist policy demanded by imperialism to achieve and remain in power only exposes the fact that the DSA and Morena are not “left” organizations and offer no way forward against the threat of imperialist oppression and fascism.

By offering such alibis for Morena, the discussion on Mexico demonstrates the pro-imperialist character of pseudo-left outfits like the DSA. No doubt they will advance similar “realpolitik” arguments for overlooking the relentless persecution of migrant workers in the US, or for that matter, the US-Israeli mass murder in Gaza, in the interests of re-electing “Genocide Joe.”

What the DSA hails in Mexico are token reform policies pursued by Morena, while letting US imperialism and the far right have their way on all fundamental issues.

AMLO’s social welfare and minimum wage policies have been strictly aimed at suppressing the increasingly explosive class struggle in Mexico. These policies have not impinged on the profit interests of the ruling elite, which is making

record profits, and have had a minimum effect on moving Mexicans out of poverty.

Sheinbaum herself told *El Financiero* on Friday that thanks to Morena, “social polarization has ceased to exist.” She explained:

The most important economic decisions in the country have been taken by consensus, and this is an enormous virtue of the President, and we are going to continue with it. The minimum wage has not been forced, it has been big and medium-sized businesspeople who have said let’s raise wages ... the same with inflation, the President did not say ‘price control’, no; he sat down with Walmart, with Comercial Mexicana, with Chedraui...

Forbes Mexico acknowledged as much. “There are favorable conditions for investment, stability and political guarantees of continuity that make the country attractive. The understanding between the business leaders and the authorities creates confidence in the development outlook for 2024.”

The DSA is led by charlatans in the service of the US State Department, whose main concern is the interests of Wall Street and preparations for war. Last August, Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, who belongs to the DSA, traveled to Colombia, Chile and Brazil to openly advance the foreign policy of the Biden administration, including promoting the NATO war against Russia in Ukraine.

As the WSWS commented about the trip, the DSA helps to fulfill “the imperative for US imperialism to tighten its semi-colonial grip over its ‘backyard’ in Latin America and suppress the class struggle at home and across the region to pursue its hegemony globally through economic and military warfare.”



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