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# US ruling class takes measure of AMLO's victory in Mexico

In the wake of Mexico's unprecedented July 1 election, widely described as a political tsunami for its sweeping away of the longstanding parties of bourgeois rule and delivering an unprecedented popular margin to MORENA party presidential candidate Andrés Manuel López Obrador, the US ruling establishment has begun to assess the significance of the results for its extensive interests south of its border.

US President Donald Trump, who has viciously slandered Mexicans, demanded that Mexico pay up to $15 billion to build a wall sealing off its northern border with the US, and exercised police state measures against refugees crossing that border, provided a markedly favorable assessment of López Obrador, popularly known by his initials as AMLO, who will take office on December 1.

Describing a half-hour phone conversation with the Mexican president-elect on Monday, Trump said: "We talked about border security. We talked about trade. We talked about NAFTA. We talked about a separate deal, just Mexico and the United States. We had a lot of good conversation. I think the relationship will be a very good one. We'll see what happens, but I really do believe it's going to be a very good one."

For his part, AMLO said that he had discussed tighter controls on the US-Mexican border as part of a "comprehensive agreement" that would include development projects in Mexico that would "create jobs" and "reduce migration."

AMLO, like his rivals, the candidate of the ruling PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party), José Antonio Meade, who won barely 16 percent of the vote, and Ricardo Anaya of the

right-wing opposition PAN (National Action Party), who won 22.5 percent, engaged in anti-Trump rhetoric during the course of the election campaign. All three were anxious to distinguish themselves from incumbent PRI President Enrique Peña Nieto, who in 2016 invited then-candidate Trump to Mexico City, where he was greeted as a prospective head of state, only to have him return to the US and bait the Mexican government over paying for a border wall.

Nonetheless, condemnation of the Trump administration's criminalization and imprisonment of refugees and the separation of families at the border, vicious practices that have provoked an outpouring of protest in the US, was notably absent from AMLO's campaign. No doubt, the MORENA candidate knew full well that he would be prosecuting the same policies of a crackdown on Mexico's own northern border and close collaboration with US immigration, police and military authorities pursued by his predecessor.

While universally described as a "leftist" in the corporate media and boosted by the illusions fostered by the pseudo-left in both Mexico and the US, AMLO has worked tirelessly to reassure both Mexican and international capital that he has no intention of introducing any policies that would infringe on their profit interests or reverse the "reforms" introduced under Peña Nieto opening up the country's energy sector, education system, telecommunications industry and other areas to privatization and foreign capitalist exploitation.

López Obrador has campaigned on the basis that corruption is the overriding problem of Mexico, presenting it as the cause, rather than the pernicious symptom, of a social system characterized by staggering inequality, mass unemployment and endemic poverty. He has vowed to take on the "power mafia," while guaranteeing an amnesty for all of the crimes carried out by previous governments and politicians, including mass killings such as the disappearance of the Ayotzinapa students.

Faced with the overwhelming victory of AMLO, who won 53 percent of the vote—30 percent more than the runner-up—and the MORENA-led coalition's achieving majorities in both houses of the Mexican parliament, the three newspapers "of record" of the US ruling establishment responded with remarkably similar editorials, expressing the sentiments and concerns of Wall Street and the financial oligarchy.

These essentially boiled down to grudging acknowledgement that AMLO represents no threat to capitalism; contempt for the masses of Mexican voters who cast their ballots in anger against the old ruling parties, the PRI and the PAN, and out of intense opposition to

the existing social conditions imposed by Mexican capitalism; and, finally, concern that the president-elect will prove incapable of containing this growing opposition within the working class.

Thus, the *Wall Street Journal*, in an editorial published Monday, expressed confidence that international capital would be able to impose its discipline upon the new Mexican government. "Financial markets will also vote on AMLO's government each day through foreign-exchange markets and the value of the peso," it said.

It added: "AMLO has moderated his rhetoric from the decades when he railed against private investment in energy and other economic competition as Mexico shifted toward free markets. But his Morena party, which he founded in 2014, is home to many who ... have never accepted the country's transition to an open economy … Mr. Lopez Obrador's challenge will be keeping those supporters happy without derailing Mexico's economic progress ..."

Similarly, the *Washington Post* editorial Tuesday dismissed AMLO's "far-fetched promises."

It warned: "Though he may prove pragmatic in office, the new president has made Mexicans some very large promises. That raises the question of what he and his followers will do once it becomes clear that he cannot deliver."

Expressing the same concerns, the *New York Times* editorialized: "If there is a danger for the United States in Mr. López Obrador's election, it is not that he will move his country radically leftward, but that he will fail to meet the high expectations he has raised."

Mexico's leading financial newspaper *El Financiero* was somewhat blunter in expressing its concerns about AMLO: "What is he going to do when the impatience of his followers leads them to commit insane acts like assaulting stores, putting up roadblocks, looting goods from trucks … Nothing that they have not done already, but the police controlled them. Will president AMLO use force to defend private property? Or will he bow to his social base?"

For the ruling classes in both the US and Mexico, the concern is not over the supposed "leftism" of AMLO, who is a reliable bourgeois politician, but rather that expectations generated by his election and the inevitable confrontation between his government and a politically radicalized working class will generate a revolutionary explosion