

México 2018: the people say *¡ya basta!*

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Neoliberal Parties and their Failure

The failure of right-wing policies of neoliberalism -- the anarchism of the rich -- has provoked much response in Mexico by the social movements (EZLN, the Zapatista Army for National Liberation, is the best-known example) and by left-wing political parties, such as the PRD (Party of the Democratic Revolution) in 1989, and since 2014, MORENA (Movimiento de Regeneración Nacional – National Regeneration Movement).

Thirty years ago, the dramatic separation between the popular political community (the people) from those who should represent them in government became even more acute due to neoliberalism. The PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party) and the PAN (National Action Party), the two dominant political parties, have abused the electoral system, exerting political violence against the popular sectors, demonstrating that the source of their power is not the people, but themselves. We call them “PRIAN” because the corrupt content of each party’s policies reveals that they are one and the same.

Thirty years of PRI/PAN (PRIAN) have left México devastated by an economic growth close to zero, and the growth of inequality: the privatization of retirement funds for state workers; the raising of the of the official retirement age; the corporatization of many public and private sector unions; the inability of the federal government to create and manage decent jobs; national companies delivered to private hands; national railway system privatized; national bank privatized while rescuing billionaire businessmen; banks mismanaged; public health services deteriorated; Normal Schools¹ for teachers disappearing; violation of national sovereignty by allowing armed DEA agents into country; development of drug cartels and their financial power; worsening of material living conditions of working people; exponential increase in violence as result of war on drugs; increase in state repression (disappearances, assassinations of journalists); mass media collusion with regime effecting virtual elimination of criticism, and so on.

¹ Normal Schools in México are where aspiring teachers study. The 43 students kidnapped on 14 September 2014 were from the Escuela Normal in Iguala, Guerrero. Where Normal Schools still exist in the USA and Canada, they are now usually called Teacher’s Colleges.

The benefits promised by the past five neoliberal presidents -- Salinas, Zedillo, Fox, Calderón, Peña - - were never realized. On the contrary, the price of gasoline increased (the “*gasolinazo*”), reaching a historically high level which caused mass protests; the inflation index is greater than the growth of wages; justice and security are absent. The undermining of community life and ethics provides the social and political framework that allows the current conservative regime to preserve its privileges over 90% of society. But it has also engendered mass dissatisfaction and a desire for a government that will serve the needs of the people.

MORENA and Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador (AMLO)

MORENA -- the political party of the left in Mexico today -- believes that authentic political representation is a must, which is why we recognize the *political community*, that is civil society, as the absolute source of political power. This political philosophy is embodied in MORENA, a social movement and inclusive political party of democratic and progressive people. It is a party to unite the nation -- not anti-capitalist, but anti-neoliberal and anti-corruption -- and whose national leader is known for his honesty and who has the ability to bring masses together: Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO).

AMLO is the one candidate who can defeat the PRIAN and the majority rightist parties and their respective coalitions. According to numerous polls of corporate media and independents, AMLO is comfortably in the lead. How does he lead the two neoliberal candidates? Why does he enjoy broad support? Here are some facts:

When Andres Manuel López Obrador was elected mayor of Mexico City, his government:

- Cut salaries of the highest officials by half, starting with the head of government.
- Increased the salaries of workers.
- Created more than fifteen high schools.
- Created the Autonomous University of Mexico City.
- Instituted a pension system for the elderly.
- Established alliances with business people to rescue the historic center, restored it and promoted the reuse of homes in that area.
- Increased foreign investment.

- Built the second tier (free use) of the Periférico. (The highway system that surrounds most of the city.)
- Created the collective passenger transport system "Metrobús".
- Established pensions for the disabled.
- Provided financial support to single mothers.
- Awarded scholarships to students with limited resources.

The parties in this year's electoral process are grouped as follows:

	Coalition	Partners	Candidate
1	Juntos haremos historia (Together we make history)	MORENA, Partido del Trabajo (PT), Encuentro Social	Andrés Manuel López Obrador
2	Por México al frente (For México to the front)	PAN, PRD, MC	Ricardo Anaya
3	Todos por México (All for México)	PRI, Nueva Alianza, Verde	José Antonio Meade

The Unity of the Right against AMLO

We have seen the right unite against the left before. On the eve of the 2006 election, facing AMLO, forces that previously supported the PRI decided to not support their own candidate Roberto Madrazo, and gave their votes instead to the PAN candidate, Felipe Calderón. Similarly, in 2012, the PAN abandoned its presidential candidate, Josefina Vázquez, when they determined that her triumph was unachievable, and instead raised votes in favor of the PRI candidate, Enrique Peña Nieto. This recent history shows that as the PRIAN regroups it will act in its own interests for what it actually is: the political and electoral franchise of the upper echelon of the Mexican bourgeoisie subservient to Western capital, particularly that of the USA.

Today, as a Sword of Damocles, the PRI and the PAN will once again unite against López Obrador. Why? AMLO has committed to cancel millionaire pensions to former presidents, to halve the salaries of top government officials, and to end the channels of corruption and impunity whereby the political class annually steals at least 500 billion pesos of public money (equivalent to more than 26 billion US dollars).

To discredit AMLO, PRIAN use the strategy of instilling fear in the population and hiding the achievements of the one candidate of the left, creating a curtain of lies around him. These lies and this fear are also promulgated in the Western press.

Jaime Rodríguez Calderón, Margarita E. Zavala Díaz del Campo, Armando Ríos Piter and Jorge Cruz Gómez participated in the pre-campaign process. With the exception of Marichuy, all participants as pre-candidates are linked in the recent or immediate past to the PAN, PRI or PRD, are not considered true independents, and do not represent relevant sectors of society and lack a social base. This appears to be calculated to divide the opposition vote and subtract votes from López Obrador with the intention to maintain the PRIAN grip on power.

The EZLN and Indigenous Peoples

During the pre-campaign period, various people took advantage of the recent reform that permits citizens to participate in elections and receive votes even if they do not belong to a political party. The National Indigenous Council (CNI) -- which together with the EZLN rejects the electoral institutions as racist and corrupt -- chose María de Jesús Patricia Martínez -- *Marichuy* -- as its pre-candidate not to win the presidency of the Republic, but to take advantage of the circumstances to give voice to the indigenous, to native peoples, the displaced, the oppressed and excluded. These self-governing peoples existed before the emergence of the national state. This is the most legitimate claim that can be made in politics: the cry of indignation of the victims and survivors of the neoliberal, racist, anti-worker regime.

MORENA has extended its hand to the indigenous movement, and respects *and will continue to respect* the agreements of San Andrés Larráinzar signed by the EZLN and Mexican government on 16 February 1996. MORENA's agenda actively includes the indigenous population. Alejandro Solalinde, the Catholic priest and defender of Central American immigrants, and who is an influential national figure and supporter of MORENA, has urged AMLO to invite Marichuy or other indigenous representative to participate in the new government and to develop policies on indigenous, peasant, and cultural issues. Both AMLO and the CNI owe it to society to hold this dialogue and the corresponding agreements.

The MORENA party and its allies, as well as particular social struggles and broad social movements, express in diverse ways the essence of our (the 99%) epic battle: our struggle expresses the desire for a decent life for all, most particularly for the victims, a dignified life that the 1% systematically has denied us. For MORENA, life without dignity is not life. The Latin American philosopher, Enrique Dussel, has said, *"who is poor is half dead."*

Recent history places us in the broader community that demands justice. Because of our growing capacity for organization and our relationship to the people, it can be said that the MORENA party is vanguard, as are the Zapatistas for Mexican indigenous communities in the non-electoral sphere. The same can be said for the Yaquis of Sonora, who defend their lands and waters against the aggression and violence of the powers that be.

Forward to the July elections!

The risk of the PRIAN committing electoral fraud again, as in 2006 and 2012, is great. The impoverishment of the population serves México's political mafia, which historically has allowed the buying and selling of votes, manipulated broad social sectors affected by their extreme need for basics, and is responsible for the marginalization that leaves them politically vulnerable. Faced with this potential scenario, MORENA's more than one million militants are trained to defend the vote, to mobilize public collective actions, to defend our national sovereignty, to vindicate the victims, and to demand the cessation of electoral fraud.

MORENA, its militancy, its project for the nation, and its candidate represents the end of privileges for the elite, and it stands for the regeneration of dignity for poor and working people. It is time, as the philosopher Walter Benjamin suggests, to make history jump, for history to reach us, a history that is erupting amongst México's impoverished in their millions. For the working people of México, this election represents a real possibility to seize their history, to retake their national legacy up until now expropriated by the PRIAN.

The people cannot bear these indignities; the time has come. It is time for history to erupt, for the honorable but impoverished people of México to recover their stolen history, and to no longer be history's object, but its subject.