HOW MORENA WINS IN 2024
WITH HELP FROM THE INDUSTRIAL-MILITARY COMPLEX

THE VOX POPULI in Mexico believes that the candidates of MORENA, the party founded by the current president in 2014, will win most of the public offices in the general elections of 2024. Should the party win a super-majority in Congress, President Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO) plans to fast-track constitutional changes before he leaves office on September 31. Among the public offices to be filled is the presidency of Mexico, the MORENA undeclared candidates for which currently compete for his preference.

Voters opposed to the president and his policies worry that a fair election is unlikely. Funding for the **National Electoral Institute** (INE) has been reduced, and the president has questioned its integrity. They also worry about how badly the non-aligned press has been treated and how opponents have been intimidated. No opposition figure, save PAN Senator Xóchitl Gálvez, has declared candidacy for president.

 A concern of another order is the unprecedented encroachment of the military in civil affairs. In 2022, the civilian national guard was put under military authority. The army and navy have been assigned responsibility for large infrastructure projects. The actual work, however, is done by civilian contractors chosen by direct award or restricted tender and outside public review. These businesses will become dependent on continued military contracts. The military, accustomed to administering billions of dollars in discretionary contracts, has a vested interest in continuing MORENA rule in 2024. The larger concern is that democratic governance is at risk of being compromised.

Contents

The outlook for open markets for services, as built into trade agreements, is problematic when direct awards substitute for international tenders and when trading partners merely fret about violations.

INTRODUCTION

FOR SKEPTICS OF THE WISDOM of the policies of President López Obrador, the increasing role of the military in public administration is a concern. Institutions that were once under civilian oversight have been transferred to the army or navy. The navy, for example, has been given responsibility for border customs and airport security.

In parallel, the president Ló has created an entirely new role for the military: The construction and management of civil infrastructure. The problem is not precisely that the army lacks the expertise regarding the design and construction of an airport, rail system, or tourist hotel; the problem is that army personnel won't be doing any of the work. Instead, the army and navy will each assume the role of a general contractor who subcontracts to new and start-up companies without public accountability. As the military is involved, its activities are shielded from normal public review by protocols of secrecy and national security.

The Energy Ministry was responsible for the design, fabrication, and construction of a major refinery. Again, no ministry analyst will lift a shovel or drive a forklift at the construction site in the president's home state of Tabasco. Outside of public view, the ministry will contract out the work.

In this way, the market segment of military contractors in Mexico has been expanded.to include politically aligned start-ups who are dependent on a new era in government contracting: gone is the requirement for an international tender to win a bid. The relationship between the procurement officials and the contractors will not be audited. A rumor circulates that these contracts have a kick-back mechanism by which a percentage of the contract value is donated to campaign funds associated with the ruling party. Thus financed, the party would likely be able to outspend challengers in the 2024 general elections.

In this way, military institutions and their officers and their preferred contractors have a vested interest in the outcome of elections.

BACKGROUND

DURING THE YEARS between 1877 and 1946, Mexico was led by military officers for all but three years (1911-13). One of the generals, Lázaro Cárdenas, is lionized in the 20th century national narrative like no other president.

In the two centuries since Mexican independence, the country has been ruled by military figures 54% of the time. Throughout the nineteenth century, military figures ruled Mexico except for sixteen years.[1] Since 1946, Mexico has been under civilian rule only fifteen years longer—since 2005— than it was under military rule (59 years) during the period 1887-1946.[2]

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[1]   Mexico has been the exception in Latin America in not having experienced military coups in a century.

[2]   Civil-Military Relations in Latin America - Political Science - Oxford Bibliographies

ADDITIONAL READING

Year	Topic	File #	Pages	Chart

2021

Jan 17, 21	**Public Officials in the Crosshairs (Part II): General Cienfuegos Is Exonerated**	925	7	1

In a prior report (MEI 921), dated Nov. 25, 2020, we discussed the uneven treatment before the law of two public servants, one of whom was Gen. Salvador Cienfuegos (Ret). We quoted AMLO as saying, in reference to the general, "We will not invent crimes." On January 15, he disparaged and dismissed the findings by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) that had implicated the general in drug-related crimes. In parallel, the Foreign Ministry made public confidential case files. These actions send a message of confrontation with the incoming U.S. Biden administration.

2006

Dec 22, 06	**Why López Obrador lost in 2006**	723	12	0

Jan 25, 07

This report examines identifies a dozen factors at play in the elections of 2006 that, together, defeated the once, sure-to-win Andrés Manuel López Obrador, the presidential candidate of the coalition led by the PRD. The working hypothesis is that the ultimate outcome of the voting on July 2 was visible by June 2. The report draws on conversations with Mexican voters, political analysts and industry observers in Mexico and the United States during the period Dec. 5-16, 2006.

Jun 29, 06	**Political endgame, 2006**	712	10	2

Jul 05, 06

This report views the elections of 2006 as a referendum on two topics: the performance of Vicente Fox as president and the readiness of Mexico to accept a government from the Left. The report draws on six months of interviews in Mexico City and elsewhere with prospective voters. The report argues that the election boils down to voting for--or against---López Obrador. A list of reasons for each choice is provided.

Jun 20, 06	**Why the PRD will win in 2006**	710	9	3

This report examines the new political situation in Mexico that arose after the televised debate on June 6, 2006, among presidential candidates. The report concludes that the electoral dynamics of the new situation, reinforced by predictable patterns of undecided voters, point to a victory by Andrés Manuel López Obrador, the PRD presidential candidate on July 2.

Additional reading

Year	Topic	File #	Pages	Chart
May 20, 06	**Why the PAN will win in 2006**	709	14	0
Jun 28, 06				
	This report examines the similarity between the successful electoral strategy employed by the PRI in the elections of 1988 and 1994 and the strategy employed by the PAN and PRI since 2004. The report concludes that the strategy that worked well in 1994 in Mexico and in 2004 in the United States will deliver a PAN victory in 2006.			

2004

Year	Topic	File #	Pages	Chart
Feb 23, 04	**Mexican elections 2006: Andrés Manuel López Obrador**	666	10	0
	This report, the second in a series on the presidential elections of 2006, draws on the presentation given by political scientist George Grayson to the Houston World Affairs Council on Feb. 11, 2004. Dr. Grayson noted that the popular mayor of Mexico City would win the 2006 presidential elections in Mexico if they were held on that date. Grayson pointed to the potentially negative effects of a López Obrador presidency--negative for international investors and Mexican politicians who seek structural reforms in energy, taxes and labor.			

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