
Mexico

Patriotism Wins a Victory Over Populism

by Rubén Cota Meza

With a vote of 251-234, the Chamber of Deputies of the Mexican Congress on Dec. 11 delivered a defeat to the Fox government's proposal for a "fiscal reform" aimed at further looting the country to pay its foreign debt. The process that led to that close vote has forged a new political alignment of forces in the country, involving the first breakaway of the nationalist and patriotic forces who, for the past several decades, have found themselves politically defeated and in retreat, and in many cases allied to historically traitorous forces represented in the ruling National Action Party (PAN).

The Dec. 11 vote also delivered a strategic blow to the plans of U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney, and of "energy pirates" of the international financial oligarchy behind him, to privatize the Mexican energy sector, impose brutal austerity to assure the unrestricted collection of the debt, and to annihilate the nation-state itself in their imperial globalization drive.

Mexico's response to Cheney's financial friends and to the International Monetary Fund was a resounding "no," just as the Russian Duma responded, in its own way, in recent parliamentary elections in that country. Playing a prominent role in that Mexican response was the LaRouche Youth Movement (LYM), which mobilized the Mexican population and institutions against Wall Street's so-called "structural reforms." As a gigantic LYM banner proclaimed at one of many rallies and demonstrations since late November against the tax reform, "LaRouche, ally of Mexico against Cheney and the IMF."

'Devastating' to Fox, Wall Street

The "fiscal reform" proposal, promoted by the Fox government, the PAN party, and a faction of more than 70 deputies of the opposition PRI party headed by Elba Esther Gordillo, sought to tax consumption of food, medicine, and labor benefits, and to create a new tax that would have triggered price increases on a variety of basic necessities to the working and middle classes. In effect, the reform hoped to turn the family expenditures of more than 70 million impoverished Mexicans into government spending money for the year 2004, while making debt payments to the international banks a top priority. Similarly, the fiscal reform would have *reduced* taxes on the multinational corporations and their handful of

Mexican partners, which have been favored by policies of privatization and opening up to foreign investments of the past two decades.

This is the umpteenth failure of the Fox government in getting through various "structural reforms"—the latest fiscal reform, the labor reform, and the decisive energy reform—as demanded by international financial interests that helped put Fox into the Presidency. Months ago, the *Wall Street Journal* was already demanding that Fox resort to "dirty politics" to break the resistance of his opponents. But this time, it didn't work.

The London *Financial Times*, mouthpiece of the City of London financial groups, covered the notice of Fox's latest defeat as a lead front-page item in its Dec. 13 edition, accompanied by a large photo of a depressed-looking Fox, which was labelled "devastating blow." The article says that the Dec. 11 vote "signalled the end of any hope for structural reforms during the remaining three years of Mr. Fox's presidential term," and cites a Mexican analyst complaining that political forces were now pushing Mexico "in the direction of the past, and a nationalistic and populist outlook."

"This is not populism," rejoined U.S. presidential candidate Lyndon LaRouche upon learning the details both of the vote and the *Financial Times*' reaction. "Those who call this 'populism,' in truth are culturally crippled, or mentally underdeveloped. *Cheney* represents populism. What happened in Mexico is a *defeat* of populism; populism was, once again, defeated by patriotism. Of this, there can be no doubt."

For LaRouche, the partisans of right-wing neo-conservative populism, like the recently-deceased editor emeritus of the *Wall Street Journal*, Robert Bartley, have suffered "a second death in Mexico this Thursday."

In the fight against the populism of the PAN (a.k.a. "the party of treason"), the LaRouche Youth Movement has been in the forefront. In the weeks leading up to the vote, the LYM had systematically distributed its statement, entitled "Let Us Built Mexico With Energy!" in cities around the country, and in particular, at the National Congress. During the Nov. 27 "mega-march" held in dozens of Mexican cities to protest the efforts of Fox and allied traitors inside the PRI party to privatize the electricity industry, the LYM succeeded in incorporating LaRouche's call for a New Bretton Woods into the official speeches of the mobilizations in Monterrey and Sonora, while taking over the microphone before thousands of people congregated in Mexico City's main plaza, the *Zócalo*, for the same purpose.

Pact With the Devil

Pressured by "the markets" which are administered and controlled by the international financial oligarchy, President Fox has placed himself at the forefront of a veritable crusade of political pressures designed to achieve the "reforms" the creditors are demanding, at all cost. He has launched himself



The defeat of the Fox government's tax-the-poor-to-pay-the-debt "fiscal reform" was also a big blow to the government's energy privatization-deregulation scheme. The LaRouche Youth Movement played a recognized catalytic role, here in the large Mexico City demonstration and in others around the country in late November.

against the opposition in the Chamber of Deputies, accusing those who refuse to hand the population, tied hand-and-foot, over to the voracious appetites of the "market," as answering to political "group interests." In his distorted sense of reality, Fox threatened to veto any other Budget Law that "causes distortions in the economy and reduces competitiveness."

In his desperation, and with the grand theatrical gestures that have come to substitute for his intellectual and political incompetence, Fox promised "not to sleep" until midnight on Dec. 31—which is the legal deadline for approving a 2004 budget—and to make "alliances even with the devil" toward achieving the "reform" demanded from abroad.

However, Vicente Fox had already made a "pact with the devil" from the moment he allied with Elba Esther Gordillo. Gordillo, who was deposed from her post of coordinator of the PRI legislative bloc in the Chamber of Deputies following a rebellion of the majority of deputies she commanded, is also the general secretary of the PRI and leader—until now the omnipotent leader—of the powerful National Union of Education Workers (SNTE). In the past months, a judicial investigation had been launched into her suspected intellectual authorship of multiple assassinations of SNTE leaders who had opposed her iron rule. She was exonerated by that investigation.

The political power Gordillo has accumulated is owed to

former President Carlos Salinas de Gortari (1988-94) who, as his first act in office in January 1989, fraudulently jailed the head of the oilworkers union, Joaquín Hernández Galicia, for opposing privatization of the state oil company Pemex. Under threat of the same treatment, the then-leader of the SNTE resigned, and withdrew to private life. Elba Esther Gordillo was thereby invested with the political power she wields today.

Those actions on the part of Salinas de Gortari terrorized political forces within the PRI, forcing them to accept policies over the next dozen years contrary to Mexico's own historic tradition, including approval of the infamous North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and finally culminating in surrender to the PAN, the historic political enemy of the Mexican nation, heir to the enemies

of Benito Juárez who facilitated the installment of the pathetic Maximilian of Hapsburg as emperor of Mexico, and who gave cover to the Synarchist forces allied to European fascism of the 1920s-1930s. Today, following three years of government by the PAN in shameful alliance with the forces led by Elba Esther Gordillo, there is a new resurgence of the historic current of political forces identified with the general welfare of the population, characteristic of the Mexican Revolution and Constitution.

However, the "instinctive" reaction of these nationalist forces has generated, thus far, a merely defensive reaction. This can be seen in the alternative budget proposal that is currently being discussed in the Chamber of Deputies, oriented only toward making tax collection more "efficient" by reducing tax evasion, while "reducing privileges" in the spending of public officials.

This in no way touches the root of the national economic catastrophe: the bankruptcy of the international financial system which has imposed a heavy and illegitimate debt yoke on the physical economy. Nor is anyone within these circles discussing any viable programmatic alternative for the reconstruction of Mexico—with energy. That is the task of the LaRouche movement and particularly the LaRouche Youth Movement. Its mobilization is increasing after the victory it has helped to catalyze so far.