

PRI Regains Mexican Presidency

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

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Like its northern neighbor, wealth and power dominate Mexican politics. Elections are notoriously tainted. Populist candidates are excluded. The late John Ross said Mexico perfected the art of electoral theft.

Longstanding problems fester. For millions, they're unbearable. They include extreme poverty, unemployment, underemployment, deep-seated private and public corruption, drug-related crime and violence, and political repression.

Beyond lip service, none of the candidates addressed them. Conditions are worse now than years earlier.

Sunday's election changed nothing. Privately, Nieto assured Washington that business as usual will continue.

On July 2, [AP](#) headlined "Mexican elections: PRI, former ruling party, voted back into office," saying:

Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) candidate Enrique Pena Nieto "promis(ed) a government that will be modern, responsible and open to criticism."

A [New York Times](#) editorial headlined "Mexico Elects a New President," saying:

"Many voters clearly felt the need for change....Nieto has a chance to restore his party's reputation and do a lot of good for Mexico if he can deliver on his promises to make belated reforms, increase accountability and end the bloodshed."

The Times gave [Nieto](#) op-ed space. He headlined "Mexico's Next Chapter," saying:

His campaign "was about....improv(ing) economic conditions for millions of struggling Mexicans" and ending political polarization and paralysis.

He's committed to democracy, he said. Change no longer can be postponed, he claimed.

Mexicans know better. PRI's history reflects a shameful legacy of subordinating populist interests to predatory capitalism, the military, and bourgeoisie privilege.

Established in 1929, it emerged from the 1910 - 1917 Mexican Revolution. During the Great Depression, class harmony and nationalist slogans co-opted workers and campesinos. Class struggles were controlled.

Revolutionary change never came. Post-war strikes were brutally repressed. In the 1980s, greater integration into global markets occurred. A new billionaire class emerged.

Crisis conditions affected ordinary Mexicans. They still do. Farmers and small businesses went bankrupt. NAFTA drove millions north. Drug trafficking spawned violence. Thousands have been killed in recent years.

Elections don't change things. Washington and Mexico partner in criminality, repression, and militarized control.

James Petras calls "narco-finance....the most advanced stage of neo-liberalism. When the respectable become criminal, the criminals become respectable," he explains.

Like America, money power and imperial interests run Mexico. Ordinary people are entirely left out. Each electoral cycle, everything changes but stay the same. Nieto's election assures more of the same.

PRI leaders ran Mexico from 1929 - 2000. National Action Party (PAN) candidate Vincente Fox ended its 70 year rule in 2000. Both parties represent common interests. It hardly matters which one rules.

Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) candidate Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador ran a populist 2006 campaign. Thereafter, he shifted markedly right. Earlier he promised expanded social benefits. No longer. Mexico's power elite knows he safe.

Mexican-style democracy reflects America's. Wealth and power run both countries. Promised change won't come. Nieto's agenda reflects it. Neoliberalism's death grip assures punishing hard times for ordinary people at a time of protracted economic Depression.

Popular support for Nieto was unimpressive. With most returns counted, Reuters said his margin was 37.6% over PRD's Obrador 32.2% and PAN candidate Josefina Vazquez Mota's 25.4%.

New Alliance Party's (PANAL) Gabriel Quadri got 2.3%. Another 2.4% of ballots were declared invalid. Turnout was about 62%.

From 2005 – 2011, Nieto served as State of Mexico governor. Critics call him a product created by Mexico's TV giants. He's a proxy for the country's biggest businesses and ruling elites.

"He's been imposed on us by powerful interests like the (corporate owned) TV stations and old presidents," said biochemist Javier Aguilar. "How can it be that a country this miserable is home to the world's richest man."

He referred to business tycoon Carlos Slim. Other billionaires, major banks, and corporate giants run Mexico. They replicate business interests in America and other Western countries.

Other critics called PRI's return to power a major setback. University students staged opposition marches in the final weeks of Nieto's campaign. They expressed no faith in his promises.

He's also dogged by accusations that he overspent his \$330 million campaign funding limit and got favorable Mexican corporate media coverage.

A [London Guardian](#) expose headlined "Spotlight falls on Televisa, Mexico's all-powerful TV station," saying:

Historian Andrew Paxman called Televisa "like Murdoch on steroids in the sense (it) has operated under far fewer constraints...."

"The company's alleged use - abuse, say critics - of programming for political and commercial ends has become an explosive issue in Sunday's election."

"...Nieto, has been thrown on the defensive over evidence uncovered by the Guardian detailing his links to Televisa, whose channels account for about two thirds of free-to-air television. Its rival, Azteca, accounts for most of the other third."

Concentrated television ownership threatens democracy, said former under-secretary of communications Purificacion Carpinteyro. "It gives them enormous power to extort....because nobody wants to be insulted or rubbed out or (negatively) exhibited on TV."

WikiLeaks cables helped expose the corrupt Televisa/Nieto relationship. One explained how the network gave him "extraordinary amounts of airtime and other kinds of (favorable) coverage."

Televisa maintained close ties to PRI for decades. Like US television giants, it supports wealth and power interests.

Voters also elected 300 Mexican lower house Chamber of Deputies members and 168 senators. Governors were chosen in six states, and Mexico City got a new mayor. PRI candidates appear to have won control of the nation's Congress.

PRD candidate Obrador questioned election results. He claimed pollsters manipulated pre-election surveys. His supporters also questioned electoral fairness.

Fraud is endemic in Mexican politics. In 2006, vote totals were falsified for current President Felipe Calderon. Millions of ballots weren't counted. Around 900,000 were declared void, blank, annulled and discarded.

Obrador won. Calderon's brother-in-law, Diego Hildebrando Zavala, designed the vote-counting software.

Mexico City mayor-elect Marcelo Ebrard said, "There is now so much evidence of fraud that the court will have to act." Nothing followed. Calderon took office.

He acknowledged Nieto's victory. He and Obama congratulated him. A [White House](#) Office of the Press Secretary release said:

"Today the President called Enrique Peña Nieto, President-elect of Mexico, to congratulate him on his victory based on the initial results issued by Mexico's electoral authorities."

"The two leaders reaffirmed the close bilateral partnership the United States and Mexico enjoy based on mutual respect, shared responsibility, and the deep connections between our people."

"The President reiterated his commitment to working in partnership with Mexico, and looks forward to advancing common goals, including promoting democracy, economic prosperity, and security in the region and around the globe, in the coming years."

"The President also congratulated the Mexican people who have once again demonstrated their commitment to democratic values through a free, fair, and transparent election process."

Obama acknowledged that Mexico is safe in his hands. Money power keeps control. The worst of what harms ordinary Mexicans will continue. Dire economic conditions assures hard times getting harder.

Mexico's history reflects revolutionary outbursts every 100 years or so. In 1810 and 1910 they erupted. Perhaps another is due any time.

In 1910, Francisco Madero triggered what Emiliano Zapata Salazar led. His supporters were called Zapatistas.

Mexicans wondered if Subcommandante Marcos was his modern incarnation. Their hopes remain unfulfilled. Indigenous struggles continue. Beneficial social change is long overdue.

The only solution is world revolution. The best way to beat organized money is with organized people. Famed Chicago community organizer Saul Alinsky (1909 - 1972) explained.

Change depends on taking to the streets, striking, boycotting, challenging authority, disrupting business, and sustaining grassroots efforts for change.

There is no other way. Throwing the bums out for more of the same fails every time.

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