

The Constitution, reforms and disloyalty

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Mexico's Political Constitution has just turned 100 years old. Since its foundation in 1917, the rights and aspirations of Mexicans to achieve greater freedom, a better democracy and a genuine and transparent justice system have constantly battled setbacks that might prevent the aims that emerged out of the armed conflict of the Mexican Revolution from being achieved. The Mexican Revolution was and has been recognised as the first of its kind in the 20th century, and one of the most important globally in terms of its political, economic and social reach.

Over the past century Mexico has endeavoured to maintain the essence of its principles and objectives, despite undergoing major and profound changes that have distanced it from its original aspirations, such as the reforms that were introduced to remove shared land and common property, or new means of labour exploitation that allow companies to use free hiring and intensive outsourcing, which they have stubbornly sought to legalise.

We have also seen the privatisation of companies, public bodies and banking institutions, as well as the sale and breaking up of national companies responsible for extracting natural non-renewable resources from the subsoil such as oil, gas and mineral products, or those involved in the generation, conversion and distribution of electrical power.

Without doubt, since the advent of economic liberalism in Mexico at the beginning of the 1980s and under the subsequent governments that pursued it as a policy over the past 30 years, the content, essence and social reach of governance have changed dramatically to give way every six years to the arrival of a new crop of multimillionaire businessmen and corporations. By acquiring companies that used to belong to the state, privatised without the nation's consent, or by means of being granted concessions or permits, these corporate influences have become able to dominate our present and future as Mexicans.

Theoretically, citizens' political and human rights are protected, and indeed embodied in the Constitution. Some of these rights are respected, while others are frequently violated under the aegis of an entirely corrupt system of abuse by the most privileged, with no regard for everything they owe to the Mexican people. More than this, many of the changes and constitutional reforms have been enacted specifically to ensure the concentration of wealth in



ever fewer hands; had the intention been to increase justice, freedom and democracy, then legal amendments would not have been needed – the law should simply have been applied correctly, transparently and fairly.

In many cases, the changes that have been made in constitutional terms have deceived and betrayed the Mexican people, and all to shore up the neoliberal project adopted by Miguel de la Madrid and Carlos Salinas de Gortari, then pursued by successive administrations right up to our current one, bolstering impunity and corruption in Mexico. This explains why our country has been discredited and lost influence across the world, and why our North American neighbours have sought to take advantage of the internal weaknesses of a model and political class which has been rendered useless.

After 100 years, politicians, legislators and we the Mexican people all have a duty to scrutinise reforms that are introduced, especially the professional legal reforms, and to analyse the objectives stated when the changes were made against the results that have actually been achieved. It simply isn't possible to act with passive acceptance when we are faced with growing poverty that already affects more than half of the population, or with labour exploitation and the lowest wages in Latin America, or with an infrastructure and manufacturing industry – except for in a handful of sectors – that are weakened and disconnected from the internal market, or when we are subjected to out of control corruption and a lack of security.

We, the Mexicans of today, have a moral obligation to ensure that future generations do not inherit a country in crisis and threatened by outside superiority and arrogance, or by a lack of a nationalist project on the part of our leaders. Our statesmen do not seem to be able to defend the nation's sovereignty and autonomy, whether for want of vision, or because the country's domestic life has been plagued with such corruption and incompetence that they cannot confront the US president's threats and insults with strength and dignity, knowing they will be shown up.

He who acts well enjoys a clean conscience, while others will reap what they sow. The people are wondering which side our government is on, and what the future might hold given the current uncertainty. Many politicians resort to collusion and forming power alliances to protect themselves from potential criticism of their failings and unchecked personal greed.

The principle of national unity and the strength of the original Constitution must prevail over small-minded interests or vulgar threats. The government and complicit businessmen who have benefited most from plundering natural resources and the workforce



have a grave and delicate responsibility. Given the current circumstances, there is no room for spineless types or thieves, nor for maintaining corruption and impunity, because if things don't change for the majority of Mexican people, history will be their judge and they will find themselves supplanted without a second thought. This is just how things are, have always been, and surely will continue to be.