Is the Deep State Attempting a Hybrid War in Mexico?

Region: Latin America & Caribbean, USA
Theme: Intelligence

An important article by journalist Ben Norton appeared on the online outlet The Grayzone describing the content of a leaked document that consists "of an executive summary of 'Project BOA,' outlining what it calls a 'plan of action' – a blueprint of concrete steps the opposition alliance will take to unseat AMLO." AMLO is Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, and BOA stands for Bloque Opositor Amplio (Broad Opposition Bloc). The document was presented by AMLO himself at a press conference in early June and the source of the leak remains unknown. Some of the alleged members of this "alliance" have denied the existence of such document. However, its content is quite credible within the geopolitical context of the region.

Who is Andrés Manuel López Obrador?

Popularly know as AMLO by the initials of his name, he became president of Mexico in December 2018 after Mexican voters gave him a strong mandate on July 1, 2018 to change the course of Mexico's domestic policies. López Obrador and his left of center National Regeneration Movement party (Movimiento de Regeneración Nacional – MORENA) dominated Mexico's presidential and legislative elections.

López Obrador won 53.2% of the presidential vote, more than 30 percentage points ahead of his nearest rival, and won in 31 of 32 Mexican states. The MORENA party won solid majorities in the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies which convened on September 1, 2018.

AMLO followed as president to conservative Enrique Peñas Nieto who had seen economic downturn and a huge organised crime rate increase mostly related to drug trafficking that the AMLO administration inherited. In fact, he was elected on his platform to combat crime, corruption and related poverty, but more emphatically he promised to fight against neoliberalism.

He called his plan the Fourth Transformation following Mexico's independence of 1810, the reform of 1861 and the Mexican revolution of 1910. One of the pillars of his government has been respecting the will of the people through popular referendums on major decisions. This he has done regularly. However, conservative critics like the Cato Institute have issued negative reports on AMLO criticising his approach as "populism", his proposals as "toxic", and his mandate as leading to a "perfect dictatorship."

Nevertheless, Lopez Obrador still commands an approval rate of 65% in the eyes of Mexicans. Why would such a popular president trigger such a strong rejection by some groups? Maybe looking at the alleged groups involved might give a hint.

Is a Deep State plot at play to overthrow AMLO?

The leaked report gives a detailed list of the composition of the "opposition alliance". Aside from most rightwing parties and former presidents Felipe Calderon and Vicente Fox, the opposition bloc "also says it has support from the governors of 14 states in Mexico, along with opposition lawmakers in both the Senate and Chamber of Deputies, judges from the Electoral Tribunal of the Federal Judiciary (TEPJF), and officials from the National Electoral Institute (INE)."

If we accept that as a fact, then to call the BOA an "Opposition Alliance" as if it were the formation of a political coalition set to democratically challenge the elected president, is really a misleading term. The secrecy of this alliance is not reassuring either.

If we in fact recognise this as an organised entity that operates surreptitiously outside the formal State to exert influence and political changes, and that, tellingly, lists "specific media outlets, along with individual journalists and social media influencers", the BOA is closer to what we know as a Deep State. Even more so when it claims to include lobbyists in Washington (White House and Capitol Hill) and financial investors on Wall Street. Only missing from the list is any reference to a military participation.

Is this proof that someone is planning a Hybrid War on Mexico?

The leaked document is clearly presented as a "plan of action" to oust Lopez Obrador. This would be done in two stages: first seemingly, through a democratic process by winning the 2021 legislative elections, and second through a parliamentary coup that would "impeach President López Obrador by 2022", two years before the end of his term.

The BOA does not suggest the legal basis for an impeachment of AMLO. But that may not be a concern at this early stage because the "action plan" describes a strategy that may easily create one. The strategy would make heavy use of "major news publications and journalists from both domestic and foreign media outlets on their team" to insistently blame AMLO for "unemployment, poverty, insecurity, and corruption" in Mexico.

The BOA document even states unambiguously in its plan that it would use "groups of social media networks, influencers, and analysts to insist on the destruction of the economy, of the democratic institutions, and the political authoritarianism of the government of the 4T" (using an acronym for the Fourth Transformation process). They go on saying, "Repeat this narrative in the US and European media."

In other words the BOA action plan intends to organise a full scale Information war in order to demonise President Lopez Obrador regardless of the reality and the truth. Let's remember that an infowar is the initial stage of a Hybrid War.

Is the US behind a possible Hybrid War on Mexico?

At this early stage it is not totally obvious. The BOA action plan would involve an appeal to Washington for support. It would do so by reminding the Trump administration about the danger to the U.S. of the high mass migration of Mexicans toward the United States. This intends to play in the hands of one of the issues that Trump has referred to constantly in relation to Mexico and led him to build a wall at the border to contain immigrants.

So far, some relevant points are, 1) AMLO's [statement](#) that "he would sell gasoline to Venezuela for 'humanitarian' reasons if asked to, despite U.S. sanctions on the South American country and its state-run oil firm, PDVSA"; 2) Mexico and Venezuela successfully had an [oil-for-food](#) exchange against U.S. sanctions on Venezuela; and 3) a swift U.S. reaction [slapping sanctions](#) on a Mexican company and another company involved in the exchange. This was followed by a [report](#) from Reuters that in an apparent unexplained compliance move Mexico froze bank accounts of entities and individuals sanctioned by the U.S.

The sequence of events may suggest a repetition of Washington's trend chasing any government that attempts to break its economic and financial siege on Venezuela, even if this involves more extraterritorial coercive measures to destabilise the economy, an infowar to demonise a leader, or a full scale Hybrid War.

It is in this ongoing scenario that AMLO will travel to Washington for a [meeting](#) with Trump in July that has been highly criticised in Mexico. At the time of writing, the [news](#) that the Mexican finance minister who has been in close contact with AMLO was tested positive for the coronavirus may have an impact on the meeting in Washington. If indeed the meeting takes place, it will be interesting to see how it will play out vis-à-vis the BOA action plan.

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