

# A Coincidence of Opposites: Trump-López Obrador Summit Charts a New Course

by Dennis Small

July 12—How dramatically might the world change if President Donald Trump were to sit down for one-on-one discussions with President Xi Jinping of China and President Vladimir Putin of Russia, without the presence of “advisers” intent on sabotaging good relations among the world’s leading powers? How dramatically did FDR shape world history through his personal diplomacy with Stalin and Churchill?

A foretaste of what such an urgent, great powers summit could accomplish—a summit of the sort Helga Zepp-LaRouche has insisted be convened by September of this year—is to be found in the July 8 set of meetings in Washington, D.C. between President Donald Trump and visiting Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador.

Both presidents are facing active, British-run operations to overthrow their governments; both were sharply attacked domestically for the very idea of meeting with the other; and both braved dire predictions that there would only be a confrontation, and nothing would be gained by meeting. Nasty quotes from each side were dredged up—some real, most fake—to try to fatally poison the well.

And yet the opposite occurred. Both presidents clearly relished proving the political Establishment’s game plan for both sides of the border dead wrong. “We’ve had a great relationship, right from the beginning. And I think that maybe was against all odds. A lot of people were betting against it, but they’ve learned not to bet against us, I suspect,” Trump chuckled. López Obrador smiled as he told Trump: “The forecasts failed; we’re not fighting. We are friends, and we shall con-



*Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador leaving the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., July 8, 2020.*

tinue being friends.”

Both men understand where the other “is coming from,” and that that is what their enemies fear. As Trump put it: “Each of us was elected on the pledge to fight corruption, return power to the people, and put the interests of our countries first. And I do that, and you do that, Mr. President.” López Obrador, who is widely referred to in Mexico as AMLO, had made precisely that point in his first [letter](#) to Trump after he won the Mexican presidential election in July 2018.

How did this diplomatic surprise come about? That is a tale of three monuments—yes, the very kinds of monuments that the deployed Jacobin hordes of late are destroying across the country, in an effort to wipe history itself off the mind of the nation.

First, there was Mount Rushmore, in whose shadow President Trump stood on July 3, five days before his meeting with AMLO, to celebrate the true nature of the

American Revolution, focusing especially on Presidents George Washington and Abraham Lincoln (see the full text of Trump’s speech in this issue.) Then, AMLO picked up directly on this historical theme in his visit. In the morning before his meeting with Trump, he laid wreaths at the Lincoln Memorial and at the statue of Benito Juárez, Mexico’s greatest president and close ally of Lincoln in their shared 19th-century war against the British and allied empires.

Herein, in what some might dismiss as mere “symbolism,” lies the actual political significance of the Trump-AMLO summit: the emphatic commitment of both heads of state to reestablishing relations along the lines of the Lincoln-Juárez alliance, and the parallel 20th century friendship between President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Mexican President Lázaro Cárdenas—historical references that were the hallmark of Lyndon LaRouche’s policy for U.S.-Mexico relations, and North-South ties in general.

### Rose Garden Remarks

We are “committing ourselves to a shared future of prosperity, security and harmony,” President Trump [declared](#) in a July 8 Rose Garden ceremony before the two presidents signed a “[Joint Declaration](#) between the United States and Mexico.” “With this signing,” President Trump said, “we pledge the close and continued friendship between the United States and Mexico, and we accelerate our progress toward an even greater tomorrow ... two sovereign nations thriving, growing, and excelling side by side, working together... the potential for the future of the United States and Mexico is unlimited.”

Trump elaborated:

The tradition of great respect between Mexican and American Presidents goes back to the early days of both of our nations. And, in particular, it includes President Abraham Lincoln and President Benito Juárez, who each held one another in very, very high esteem. They were great friends and they did great things together. And we are grateful that, this morning, President López Obrador laid a wreath at the memorials that stand to



White House/Shealah Craighead

*President López Obrador and President Trump in the Rose Garden of the White House, displaying their Joint Declaration in which they pledge “close and continued friendship between the U.S. and Mexico,” July 8, 2020.*

each of these leaders, right here in our nation’s capital.

López Obrador expanded this history in his remarks.

The best President Mexico has ever had, Benito Juárez García, as you have mentioned, had a good understanding with the great Republican President, Abraham Lincoln. Let us remember that this great, historic leader of the United States, who was the promoter of the abolition of slavery, never recognized Emperor Maximilian, [who was] imposed on Mexico through the intervention of the powerful French army.

He continued, “The same thing happened with the splendid relationship that Democrat President Franklin Delano Roosevelt had with our patriot President, General Lázaro Cárdenas.” AMLO cited General Cárdenas’s expression of deep appreciation of FDR’s acceptance of Mexico’s right to expropriate foreign investors looting Mexico’s oil, as a reassertion by Franklin Roosevelt “of the sovereignty of the peoples of this continent.”

Trump spoke warmly of the “36 million incredible Mexican-American citizens,” hardworking people who “uplift our communities,” and contribute to every aspect of American industry, commerce, science, medicine, police, and military. Turning to López Obrador with a smile, he added: “They’re like you: They’re

tough negotiators and great business people, Mr. President.”

López Obrador thanked Trump for having personally intervened to help Mexico acquire ventilators to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. Turning to Trump, he added:

But what I mainly appreciate is that you have never sought to impose anything on us violating our sovereignty.... [Y]ou have followed, in our case, the wise advice of the illustrious and prudent President George Washington, who said, “Nations should not take advantage of the unfortunate condition of other peoples.” You have not tried to treat us as a colony; on the contrary, you have honored our condition as an independent nation.

He then addressed the American people:

That’s why I’m here to express to the people of the United States that their President has behaved with us with kindness and respect. You have treated us just as what we are: a country and a dignified people; a free, democratic, and sovereign people. Long live the friendship of our two nations.

It is highly unusual for a Mexican President to address the American people directly about their sitting President, all the more so in the middle of a heated election campaign—a point not lost on the Biden campaign and its Establishment sponsors.

Upon his return to Mexico, AMLO briefed his nation in a July 10 press conference, stressing that he and President Trump intend to base current relations on the very best in the other nation’s past:

The heroes of that nation [the U.S.] always sought to have a relationship with Mexico based on respect. [In the U.S.] I spoke of three [presidents], of the exemplary behavior of the U.S.’s heroes towards Mexico; the good presidents that

the U.S. has had and who have been respectful towards Mexico. As for those who were not respectful, well we aren’t going to recall them. It’s better to forget.

He recalled that a number of persecuted Mexican presidents, including Juárez, had sought refuge in the U.S., “The United States, because of how it was founded, the way in which that nation was founded, its first settlers, its first colonists established a truly democratic political system.”



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*López Obrador pays homage to Mexico’s hero-President, Benito Juárez, at a wreath-laying ceremony in Washington, D.C., July 8, 2020.*

## The Back Story

For nearly 40 years, since the end of the José López Portillo presidency (1976-1982), Mexico’s economy has been viciously looted by Wall Street and the City of London’s debt collection practices, usually with the unambiguous backing of Washington. This bankers’ dictatorship was codified in the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which was finally revoked by President Trump and replaced by the USMCA (United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement), which was signed by Trump and AMLO during their meeting. Although the USMCA is inadequate, and leaves most of Wall Street’s control over the North American economies still to be crushed, it is far better than the despised NAFTA.

For those same 40 years, American statesman Lyndon LaRouche organized internationally around the concept that replacing that bankers’ looting with a mutually beneficial economic development policy between the U.S.

and Mexico, “would represent in principle the model for a new economic order in North-South relations. . . . There would be a change in the global strategic geometry resulting in chain-reaction fashion from the establishment of such a relationship,” LaRouche stated in a March 20, 1981 [speech](#) at the Monterrey Institute of Technology. He repeatedly referred to the relationship between Lincoln and Juárez, and between FDR and Cárdenas, as paradigmatic of what U.S.-Mexico relations should be. In fact, LaRouche’s own working relationship over decades with Mexican President José López Portillo was built on precisely that idea and precedent. See the report from 2002 that follows this article.

The Trump-AMLO decision to return to the best moments of U.S.-Mexican relations didn’t just happen out of the blue. In fact, all of the major features of the meeting had clearly been agreed to and carefully prepared in advance, as an unnamed White House official made clear in a pre-summit briefing to a small group of reporters: “President Donald Trump wants to ‘imitate’ with his Mexican counterpart Andrés Manuel López Obrador, the good relationship that the former Presidents Abraham Lincoln and Benito Juárez had.”

In fact, the influence of LaRouche’s ideas is woven into the very fabric of U.S.-Mexican relations over the last four decades. [See](#) “LaRouche’s Unfinished War for a New World Economic Order,” in *EIR*, May 24, 2019, pages 22-38.

### Support from Mexico’s LaRouche Movement

When López Obrador won the Mexican presidential election on July 1, 2018 with a landslide victory, the LaRouche Movement in Mexico issued an “Open Letter to Andrés Manuel López Obrador” on August 20, in the form of a 20-page [pamphlet](#) published under the headline “China-Mexico-U.S. Economic Cooperation: How To Forge a New World Paradigm and Reconstruct the Nation.” The document circulated widely in political circles in Mexico. LaRouche movement organizers also handed the pamphlet personally to AMLO on at least three occasions. The pamphlet reviewed Lyndon LaRouche’s history of promoting U.S.-Mexican relations based on the Lincoln-Juárez alliance, and concluded:

Regarding immediate action steps to be taken, AMLO’s idea of inviting Xi Jinping and Trump to his inauguration is a very good one. They could take advantage of the opportunity to discuss the matters we have indicated here, among

other things. To actually resolve the problems facing the country, the region and the world, the discussion has to move in that direction . . . We have to return to the best of our respective nations and cultures, as must also be done on a world scale. Let us mutually help each other build a “win-win” world, as Xi Jinping has said.

To help shape the environment before the July 8 Trump-AMLO summit, the Mexican LaRouche movement circulated a policy statement across Ibero-America headlined, “The Message Which López Obrador Should Take to Trump,” which highlighted

the world importance of that meeting [of Trump and AMLO], in particular because of the role that Mexico will play as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, starting on Jan. 1, 2021. At the beginning of 2020, Russian President Vladimir Putin proposed that a summit be held of the five permanent members (P5) of the UN Security Council to address the grave crises which the entire planet is facing, and which require immediate joint action . . . Such a summit must be held as soon as possible, based on the same approach that the great American President Franklin Delano Roosevelt set forth in his New Deal and Good Neighbor policies. That is the central message which President López Obrador should communicate to his counterpart President Trump at their upcoming meeting.

### REPORT FROM 2002

## LaRouche in Dialogue with José López Portillo

On August 22-23, 2002, the LaRouche movement organized an international conference in Guadalajara, Mexico, “Mexico-Brazil-Argentina: The Hour of Integration—March Towards a New Bretton Woods,” to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the publication of *Operation Juárez*, the book-length [study](#) by Lyndon LaRouche in 1982, written after meeting with José López Portillo, then President of Mexico. The gathering was addressed by both LaRouche and former President López Portillo (1976-1982).

LaRouche, who could not travel to Guadalajara because Mexican authorities would not meet the security conditions required for his visit, sent a written [speech](#). The United States, LaRouche said, was founded to foster what is known as the general welfare, or Common Good, but from the outset the oligarchy tried to destroy that intention, and to keep any other country which reflected the success of the American Republic from emerging elsewhere in the world.

LaRouche said in his speech,

That changed, with the victory of Abraham Lincoln, Abraham Lincoln's government, in the Civil War within the United States ... [T]he British and a fascist ruler, Napoleon III, the Emperor of France, combined forces to invade and crush Mexico, crushing the legitimate President of Mexico, Benito Juárez. At the close of that period, after the fascist tyranny of the Emperor Maximilian, who was essentially a Hapsburg puppet, a British puppet ... the French were kicked out of the Americas ... and Juárez, after a series of events, reestablished the Republic of Mexico.

Since that time, the ebb and flow within the United States, has determined U.S. relations with Mexico. They were better under Franklin Roosevelt; terrible under his predecessor, Theodore Roosevelt ... but then came 1982: A new monetary system had been put into place, in 1971. A literally fascist tendency in the United States, of sympathizers of the former Confederacy, [took power with Richard Nixon, and set out to eliminate] not only the Franklin Roosevelt legacy, but the legacy of Lincoln and all other great founding figures of the United States.

Mexico began to feel the pressure....

In that period, I met briefly with President López Portillo, in his office, and we discussed the matter. And he asked me: What is the fate of Mexico, in this situation? And I said, "Well, the intention in Washington and New York is to crush you, with a blow to come down no later than September of this year." And from that discussion, and discussion with others in the Americas, there came my determination to set forth a policy, as an economist, which would be ade-

quate to deal with the crisis, which was then, at that time, coming down on all of the states of the Americas: Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina, foremost.

There was a brief period, said LaRouche, in which it appeared that his policy document, *Operation Juárez*, would be adopted by the U.S. government. Had that happened, the Ibero-American countries, LaRouche said,

would have been able to defend themselves, and also to win the United States government to cooperate with them.

Unfortunately, that did not occur. Henry Kissinger went to Mexico in October, for example; other pressures came down; U.S. State Department officials, from that point on, said, "This guy LaRouche will never be allowed in Mexico, again." I was considered too dangerous to be turned loose. So, that's what it was.

We are now at the tail-end of an international monetary system, and, either we replace it by returning to a system along the lines of the old Bretton Woods system, or the nations will die, he said, continuing:

Only if we can win that fight, will we have the correlation of forces, to give the Americas as a whole, the justice which they are presently being denied. And thus, the tradition of Lincoln's implicit alliance, with Benito Juárez, and the struggle for the development of a true Mexican Republic, is the precedent to which we must turn today.

In his [speech](#), which was read on his behalf, as he was unable to travel for health reasons, former President López Portillo lamented that LaRouche was not present personally in Guadalajara "to enlighten us with his expert teaching, although, of course, I am happy, and send my greetings, to his worthy spouse, Helga Zepp." López Portillo said, that "if we want a better world, and we do, we must march towards a New International Financial Order which serves the needs of the powerful countries, and of those which, not being so, wish to resolve their national population's social problems."