Mexican president-elect to hold referendum to investigate former leaders over corruption

Mexico City, November 23 (RHC)-- In Mexico, president-elect Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador announced he would submit to popular opinion the investigation of former presidents on corruption charges, a day after his controversial comments about forgiving cases previous to his government.

In an interview with Carmen Aristegui, Lopez Obrador said he would submit to consultation the investigations as well as his plans to have a group of wealthy business people as special advisers and to create a National Guard, after campaign announcements that have sparked controversy even among his followers. The president-elect said the consultation would take place once he takes office.

The trial of drug-lord Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman has tainted high profile politicians in Mexican politics, as both the defense and the attorneys have included them in their arguments and declarations, including the incumbent president Enrique Peña Nieto and his predecessor Felipe Calderon, who declared the "war on drugs."

Lopez Obrador's declarations come in response to such accusations, arguing he doesn't want to start a "witch hunt" to avoid a political war in Mexico. But when asked by Aristegui if he would also submit that to

popular consultation, as it did with the New International Airpot of Mexico City (NAICM) and he's now doing with the Maya Train and different development and social assistance programs, Lopez Obrador had a proposal ready:

 * Do you think Andres Manuel should promote justice, and not just prosecuting scapegoats, and investigate corruption cases and others for Salinas (1988-1994), Zedillo (1994-2000), Fox (2000-2006), Calderon (2006-2012) and Peña Nieto (2012-2018)?

* Do you think Andres Manuel, the president of the republic, should have a group of advisers to consult on productive projects, ask for their points of view?

* Do you think the president should promote or not a National Guard for Mexico?

"Let's do three at once. In the first case, I'm in favor. For these issues won't be impartial. I want to inform the people correctly and the opposition to do their thing, open up for debate the three topics and go to a consultation," he said.

One of Lopez Obrador's main campaign promises was to fiercely combat corruption, but during an improvised interview, he declared he wouldn't prosecute anyone if the case preceded his administration. Starting December 1st, he would impose zero tolerance.

On Thursday, he announced that a group made of Ricardo Salinas Pliego, Bernardo Gomez, Olegario Vazquez Aldir, Carlos Hank Gonzalez, Daniel Chavez, Miguel Rincon, Sergio Gutierrez and Miguel Aleman (son), politicians and tycoons who own the mainstream media outlets, hotels, and other businesses, would be his advisers.

Also, his announcement to reform the constitution to give the military the ability to carry out public security duties and form the National Guard, a 50,000-strong special security police force trained by the military, also faced criticism.

The first and so-far last consultation was about the controversial new airport in Texcoco, which he promised to cancel and instead adapt an already existing military airbase for commercial flights instead. Shortly after winning the elections, Lopez Obrador announced he wouldn't cancel it, as contracts had already been celebrated, but backtracked after receiving heavy criticism from supporters.

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