



POLITICS / MEXICO

All eyes on Amlo

With just weeks to go until Mexico's presidential election, Andrés Manuel López Obrador is the candidate to beat. He's no orator but he's making all the right noises.

WRITER Ed Stocker PHOTOGRAPHER Brett Gundlock

Andrés Manuel López Obrador knows how to make an entrance. It's early evening in the Mexico City borough of Álvaro Obregón and Mexico's presidential frontrunner has just arrived at his latest rally on the back of a motor-bike. Amid pushing, shoving and a few raised voices from those who have waited hours to see their star, the candidate is funnelled through the throng encircled by a protective cordon of people belonging to his National Regeneration Movement (Morena party).

With just weeks to go until the 1 July election, the man known as Amlo is comfortably in the lead. According to a poll, the 64-year-old leftist has a 20-point advantage over his nearest rival, 39-year-old lawyer Ricardo Anaya. Attending the rally, newspaper seller Mario Morales, 56, tells us why he's voting for him: "He's the only man who knows the smallest corners of Mexico, from Chiapas to Tijuana." Morales has a point. No one has rushed around the country like him. According to official figures he had visited 102 cities in 26 states by mid-May compared to third-placed José Antonio Meade, whose coalition includes the ruling Institutional Revolutionary party (PRI) and who has visited 54 metropolises in 23 states.

Addressing the crowd, Amlo pulls out many of his stock sentences including condemning "la mafia del poder" (the power mafia) – a reference to corrupt elites. He's no natural orator and his speech often sounds jerky as he struggles to find the right words. But it's his fallibility – and his easy-to-comprehend language peppered with occasional jokes – that endears him to his supporters.

"I don't think he has an ease with words," says Elena Poniatowska, 86, a celebrated writer and social campaigner, sitting at home next to a cushion embroidered with an image of Amlo. A supporter from when he was Mexico City mayor from 2000 to 2005 – alongside failed presidential bids in 2006 and 2012 – she says there's "something religious" about the way he is now greeted.



Clockwise from top left: Turning out for Amlo; Amlo greeting his supporters; Campeche governor Rafael Alejandro Moreno Cárdenas at a rally for Meade; Meade campaign event; Anaya taking questions



It's Amlo's fallibility – and his easy-to-comprehend speech peppered with occasional jokes – that endears him to his supporters



As Amlo waves at crowds, his closest rival Anaya is also attending a rally. Earlier in the day in Polanco he hosted a closed-door meeting with the agricultural sector, the sort of get-together that for some reinforces the idea that he's pandering to the elite. In what has proved a vitriolic campaign, Anaya – who represents a left-right coalition – has been accused by his detractors of having suspicious offshore bank accounts and pushing business owners to cajole employees into voting for him. To many he represents the status quo. It's an image reinforced by the fact he voted with Mexican president Enrique Peña Nieto on a series of structural reforms.

So does that make him a "change candidate"? "Of course," he replies. "I've voted in favour of what I think is good for the country like education reform – although I think it was badly implemented – and I've voted against reforms that I think [adversely] affect the country."

Peña Nieto's presidency has been mired by a spike in drugs-related violence and by the state's seeming willingness to cover up the murder of 43 students teachers in Iguala in 2014. "This election is going to be a referendum on Peña Nieto's presidency," says Genaro Lozano, a political scientist, columnist and TV presenter.

Perhaps the hardest job has been left to Meade. He has made a point of portraying himself as "his own man" and attempting to distance himself from luxury by travelling on commercial planes. The PRI, which held continuous power for much of the 20th century until the return of democracy in 2000, is still able to mobilise. A recent campaign stop in Campeche saw Meade inside a packed conference hall greeted by activists rattling football-style

matracas. He manifests his clean reputation before shouting "We're going to win!" Away from the crowds, he's more reticent. "I'm convinced I have a good chance," he says. But his failure to distance himself from Peña Nieto – or criticise the way he welcomed Donald Trump to Mexico – may be his downfall.

For now, Amlo's lead seems unassailable. "It will be difficult for him not to win," says Tania Montalvo, general editor at Verificado2018, a website created to counter fake news. "People see in Morena a hope for change," says Khemvirg Puente Martínez, co-ordinator at the Mexico National University's Centre for Political Studies, "even though they're not certain what the consequences will be." With candidates often sketchy on detail, perhaps simply the guarantee of change is good enough for now.



Relationship with the US

Mexico's campaign has covered themes from security and poverty to removing immunity for politicians and equal pay for women. But Donald Trump and NAFTA have never been far from the equation and dominated the most recent election debate in Tijuana. When Trump announced that he would slap import duties on steel, the government of incumbent Enrique Peña Nieto said it would respond with "equivalent measures". Still, many Mexicans have not forgiven Peña Nieto for rolling out the red carpet for Trump. Ricardo Anaya told us that Peña Nieto made an "historic error" and, while he wanted a relationship with the US president, it needed to be one of "mutual respect". Jose Antonio Meade told us that NAFTA needs to be "more inclusive". López Obrador, who has written a book entitled *Oye, Trump (Listen, Trump)*, has counselled Peña Nieto to meet the US leader in person and be firm – but not to get sucked into a commercial war.



June issue: We go onboard a Spanish medical ship and meet the crew. Pick up your copy of Monocle today.

monocle.com
monocle.com/radio

JUSTICE / BRUSSELS

Clean as a whistle

New EU legislation aims to further protect workers who step forward to halt institutional wrongdoing.

WRITER Peter Firth

From the Panama Papers to the recent transgressions of Cambridge Analytica, it would appear that whistle-blowers have taken a more pivotal role in the way that we hold companies, institutions and governments to account. But it still isn't enough according to Vera Jourová, the European commissioner for justice, consumers and gender equality.

"Our research shows that the majority of people feel that they will suffer some form of retaliation if they accuse a company or institution of wrongdoing," she says. "They fear that they will lose their jobs, that they will be an object of

defamation and their entire future might be compromised. We are not doing enough to allay these fears." Jourová, from the Czech Republic, believes that whistle-blowers could provide an even greater service to society if they were given better protection under EU legislation. As such she has proposed a new EU directive that would provide people with clear confidential channels through which to report wrongdoings and secure them protection against retaliation from their employer. This might include protected status and, in some cases, financial support.

This could be a positive step. If recent history is anything to go by there isn't much incentive for

"They fear that they will lose their jobs, that they will be an object of defamation. We are not doing enough to allay these fears"



Image: Getty Images

whistle-blowers to come forward – a moral crisis often seems to be the driving motivator – and sometimes they face a grim outcome for their trouble. Whistle-blowers have been fired, deported and even imprisoned in recent years for choosing to

expose an ethical transgression or even a crime. It is true that some EU countries already offer protection for whistle-blowers; however, Jourová's directive proposes a consolidation of protective measures that would apply across sectors and in all EU

SHIPPING / GLOBAL

Uncharted waters

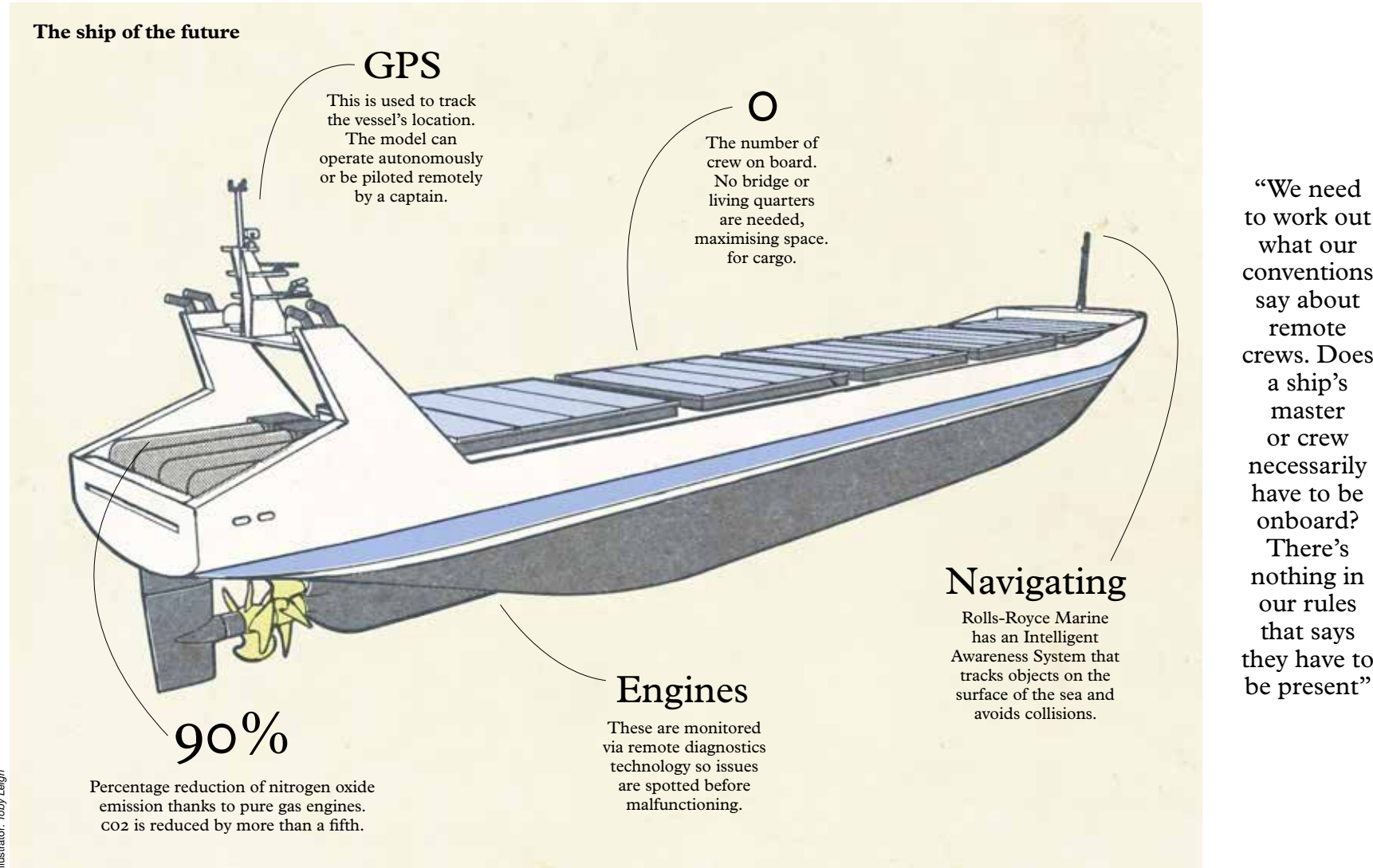
Self-driving ships will be crossing the seas after 2025. First, a revised rulebook needs to plot a course.

WRITER Sophie Grove

We have all heard about the possibilities of self-driving cars but what about autonomous ships? Supertankers coursing international waters without a human crew are a very possible reality for the marine industry. Rolls Royce Marine has been working alongside the likes of Google, ship designers such as Deltamarin and even the European Space Agency to develop self-navigating vessels. "We want to make autonomous ships commercially available before the decade is out," says Karno Tenovu, the company's senior vice-president for ship intelligence."

But what would happen to the centuries-old conventions that govern the oceans? How will crew-less vessels avoid collisions and pick up SOS calls? These are all questions that were raised as the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) chaired a working group in London in late May to launch a new "scoping" study into the safe, secure and environmentally sound operation of autonomous ships. "We need to work out what our regulations say about remote crews," says Heike Deggen, director of the Maritime Safety Division, sitting in her office overlooking the Thames. "Does a ship's master or crew necessarily have to be onboard? There's nothing in our rules that says they have to be present."

One of Deggen's priorities is to see how Solas, a convention about the safety of life at sea first introduced after the *Titanic* disaster of 1912, will be affected by the influx of smart-ships. How will a robot ship tow a vessel in distress or



rescue a man overboard? Another task will be cybersecurity. The shipping industry's vulnerability was made clear when a hacker took AP Møller-Maersk's systems ransom last year – costing the company an estimated \$300m (£256m). "This is a traditional industry," says Deggen. "Shipping has been around for hundreds of years. It doesn't have a new start-up mentality but we have to be more prepared."

One of the IMO's problems is that it doesn't know how many autonomous ships are out there. A case study has been provided by Norway, which is trialling autonomous ships on its south coast. But it's likely that many industry giants are keeping their developments under wraps. We know the EU is working on a project to develop a dry-bulk carrier while Elon Musk is working on drone ships, as is the US navy. "Right now it is too early

to say that autonomous ships will be safer than ships operated by crew," says Deggen, who nonetheless points out that during the 1980s more than 300 ships were lost at sea per year; with technology that figure is down to 100, despite the rise in sea traffic. The IMO is determined to future-proof its marine safety framework but also represent seafarers whose jobs could be at risk from the new technology. The topic is already

dividing opinion and galvanising the industry. May's working group was one of the best attended ever, with 45 nations represented. In late June the industry will convene in Amsterdam for another symposium to swap notes and chart a course through what autonomous ships might mean for the future of international waters. The hope is they can get their age-old rules shipshape for the potential revolution in the offing.

PUBLISHING / FRANCE

Q&A Daphné Héazard

France has a new magazine aimed at the country's growing cadre of green-fingered readers. *Regain*, which launches in France on 21 June, will meet unsung farming heroes and document the country's "neo-rural" trend, while giving advice on chimneys and country walks. Its editor is none other than MONOCLE's fashion director Daphné Héazard. **Sophie Grove**

Q. Where did the idea for 'Regain' spring from?

A. While I was travelling in Tuscany two years ago I discovered a full collection of vintage magazines called *Progresso Agricolo* in an abandoned palazzo. The covers were gorgeous: hand-illustrated with beautiful, elegant drawings of eggs, tomatoes and cabbage leaves. But inside they were celebrating intensive farming. Back

in France I had a look at the kiosks and found that there were no publications about sustainable agriculture and no magazines about gardening with a real sense of aesthetics.

Q. Why do you think France needs a magazine like 'Regain'?
A. We've seen a profound shift in the French mindset over the past few years. The consumer is buying differently, the organic sector is booming and farmers are switching methods of production: small farms, no fertilisers – growing things the old-fashioned way. We saw a gap in the market for a manifesto-like magazine that reaches out to those who want a good slow read about the countryside, terroir, nature and how things are produced.

Q. Is the idea to elevate farmers and rural affairs?
A. *Regain* is not a coffee-table magazine. It celebrates the actions of a young generation of farmers who previously had no visibility. It's also a magazine for gardening with beautiful pictures, engaging articles and practical advice.



"I had a look at the kiosks and found that there were no publications about sustainable agriculture and no magazines about gardening with a real sense of aesthetics"

Q. Parisians are taking up urban agriculture. Will this be part of the magazine's focus?

A. Paris is a plant laboratory; everybody's experimenting and growing herbs and flowers. People are rediscovering the virtues of gardening. *Regain* will have its eye on this but the magazine will focus on rural life more than cities.

Q. But is there a movement to return to the land in France?

A. Yes, many French farmers are retiring and young city people are choosing to get closer to the earth. They're in

search of meaning; they want more physical outdoors work, to use their brain and their hands.

Q. Is there an ecological angle here too? It was recently revealed that France has lost a vast percentage of its bird population through intensive farming.

A. True. Intensive farming has led to a sad situation in terms of biodiversity. The decline is faster than our actions and political decisions. Even though a form of environmental awareness has reached every level of society, our actions are too slow and too weak.

Q. So does 'Regain' inspire a move to the country?

A. There are countless incredible stories. For the first issue, we meet Jacques Massacrier who left Paris in the 1970s and wrote a best-selling book called *Savoir Réviser*. We talk to Claude and Lydia Bourguignon, kings of the French soil; we go to the Plaine de la Crau to find out how to become a shepherd; and we spend four days on a farm learning how to make goat's cheese.