

Juárez, Benito ^[1]

Type of Speech:

noun ^[2]

Definition:

Nineteenth-century president of Mexico and architect of the 1857 Liberal Constitution. The leading nineteenth century president of Mexico, and a Zapotec from Oaxaca, Juárez (1806-1872) is chiefly remembered for the 1857 Liberal Constitution, or Ley de Reforma. He led the liberals in the last civil war -- the War of the Reform, 1858-1861 — after repeated civil conflicts, and the war with the United States had wracked Mexico throughout the post-independence period. Inheriting the leadership of such a ravaged country, Juárez called a moratorium on payments of the national debt for two-years which led England, Spain and France to attack and occupy Veracruz. The French, under Napoleon III, decided to invade Mexico and install an emperor, Maximilian. Juárez defeated the French incursion with some US assistance (the Monroe Doctrine was unenforceable during the US Civil War) by 1867, and restored the Mexican republic again. Traveling in Mexico today, one often sees portraits or statues of Juárez. Perhaps his most famous quote is "Peace is respect for the rights of others"

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