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Mexico

Marcos, ATTAC and José Bové

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Saturday, March 11, 2001, Xochimilco, Mexico, last stage in the Zapatista National Liberation Army's (ZNLA) march before a triumphal arrival in Mexico City the next day, Zapatista leader, Subcommander Marcos, surrounded by 23 men and women of the rebel ZNLA, met with a French delegation composed of José Bové, spokesperson for the Farmers' Federation, Bernard Cassen, President of ATTAC and Danielle Mitterrand, President of the French Freedom Foundation.

[<http://www.internationalviewpoint.org/local/cache-vignettes/L225xH150/bovemarcos-3ffec.jpg>] Bove, Cassen and Marcos

The purpose of the meeting had been decided upon in Chiapas in a recent discussion between Marcos and Ignacio Ramonet, Director of Le Monde diplomatique and Honorary President of ATTAC.

Subcommander Marcos stated that, once the Mexican government fully fulfils the contractual obligations it made in the 1996 San Andrés agreements and, in particular, sends the Indian Bill of Rights and Culture to Congress, it was his intention to create a political organization in Mexico in which everyone will be able to act openly and, unlike political parties, will oppose the devastating effects of neo-liberalism and globalization. The Subcommander stated that this organization, even if it does not bear ATTACs name, will act in consort with ATTACs international network as it presently exists in Europe, Africa, America and everywhere citizens' movements exist to oppose globalization.

Marcos reaffirmed his total support for the initiatives undertaken by the World Social Forum (WSF) in Porto Alegre and his intention, in particular, to take an active role, as soon as circumstances permit, by visiting Porto Alegre - a name which has come to symbolize resistance to globalization. For the immediate future, Marcos and the French delegates proposed to organize a first international meeting in Mexico City on April 14 and 15 prior to the second WSF to take place in Porto Alegre. Captioned, "Porto Alegre Contra ALCA (FTAA)," the meeting will bring together the speakers and participants who came from every corner of the globe to the first WSF and the intellectuals and representatives of the Mexican citizens' movement. It is scheduled to take place one week prior to the Summit of the Americas in Quebec City and one week after the demonstrations that are expected in Buenos Aires when the Ministers of Finance from the countries negotiating the "ALCA" will meet.

José Bové, speaking on behalf of Via Campesina, then proposed that a seminar be held, as a second phase, in Mexico, in around August, in preparation for the the World Social Forum 2002 in Porto Alegre on the topic of peasant farming This seminar will take place immediately after the Latin-American Congress of Via Campesina. Organizations representing farmers from other continents will be invited to attend with their Latin-American counterparts. Together, they will draw up an inventory of cultivated lands in the world and work out precise proposals which will be presented at the WSF.

Subcommander Marcos announced his intention, furthermore, to participate in the initiatives to be taken by ATTAC, Via Campesina and other citizens' organizations in the world as a whole to scuttle the plans for increased "liberalization" of international trade. Such plans are on the agenda of the next ministerial conference of the WTO scheduled to take place in Qatar in November 2001.

Bernard Cassen proposed that Marcos and other members of the ZNLA form a delegation which will be invited to France and other European countries by ATTAC, the Farmers' Federation, the French Freedom Foundation and Le Monde diplomatique. Marcos accepted this invitation in the hopes that the situation in Mexico will evolve and permit him to quickly honour his commitment.

Mexico City, March 11, 2001

José Bové, Farmers' Federation

Bernard Cassen, ATTAC