

<https://internationalviewpoint.org/spip.php?article1168>



Mexico

Oaxaca: final crisis of the "old order"

- IV Online magazine - 2006 - IV383 - November 2006 -

Publication date: Thursday 30 November 2006

Copyright © International Viewpoint - online socialist magazine - All rights reserved

On December 1st the Mexican federal government will hold its traditional inauguration ceremony in which the outgoing president takes off the tricolour ribbon and hands it over to his successor. In this case president Vicente Fox will give it to Felipe Calderón, the president elect of his own party, the PAN (Party of National Action). It is the ceremony of presidential changeover, which for eighty years has never been interrupted, nor threatened with suspension.

For the first time in that long trajectory of political stability, on which the Mexican bourgeoisie has always prided itself, for the first time since the Mexican revolution of 1910-1919, clouds threaten this rite which is fundamental to the continuity and legitimacy of the bourgeois state in Mexico.

[<https://internationalviewpoint.org/IMG/jpg/appo.jpg>]

This situation is explained not only by the fact that for the first time in decades there seem to be irremediable ruptures at the summit of the Mexican bourgeois regime and the struggles between the three governing parties have deepened, as very evidently could be appreciated during the great fraud committed in the presidential elections against Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador (AMLO) last July 2.

The political confrontation which has broken out explains why the PRD (Party of the Democratic Revolution) is preparing an alternative ceremony on November 20 (date of celebration of the beginning of the Mexican revolution) and that for the first time President Fox has cancelled his official celebration in the Zocalo in Mexico City so that AMLO is invested by the Democratic National Convention as "legitimate president" in the same place, the political heart of republic. This ceremony will be the counterpart of the investiture of Calderón in the Legislative Palace eleven days later.

"A bourgeois dual power"? Not really, more prosaically a forceful demonstration of a major political crisis of the "Mexican democracy" inaugurated in 2000 with the victory of Fox. The official world and its media spokespersons declared that the replacement in the presidency of the republic of the decadent PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party) by PAN was proof of the political maturity of a supposedly renewed political system and threw their hats in the air. Mexico, they said, was in a new stage, with the old regime superseded, and had joined the select club of authentic "democracies". It is ever more obvious that all that was a fraud, a simulation, a pact at the top so that the important things would stay the same... or get worse.

Oaxaca burns

The clouds of uncertainty that hangs over the new government which Calderón is already preparing, is a consequence fundamentally of an impressive popular discontent throughout the republic which in the last six months has expressed itself in diverse forms, from occupations of an avenue by children of eight to ten years protesting against the dismissal of their teacher (as happened a few days ago in Mexico City) to the popular rebellion that has led to the emergence of a real embryo of dual power (a Commune) in the city of Oaxaca and surrounding municipalities.

The APPO (Popular Assembly of the Peoples of Oaxaca) emerged in June, after the savage repression by the police force of the PRI governor of the state of Oaxaca, Ulises Ruiz Ortiz (URO), of striking teachers from section XXII of the SNTE (National Union of Education Workers), backbone of the CNTE (National Coordination of Education Workers), the democratic current inside union. This occurred at the height of the electoral process and its destiny

became linked to the struggle against the neoliberal policy of the Foxista government that has expanded since, with ebbs and flows depending on the particular situation of the states and the levels of popular organization, throughout the country.

For five months the local and increasingly the federal governments have tried everything to divide and to repress the movement. The firmness and strength of the teaching and popular rank and files overcame these obstacles. The Secretary of the Interior tried to take advantage of the months the teachers had gone without pay to divide their ranks. He obtained a small victory with the decision of the secretary of section XXII, Rueda Pacheco, to try to end the teaching strike and return to classes, an agreement followed only by a minority. And to the extent that the conflict has extended for almost half a year, politicisation and radicalisation have also been deepened. Since URO's PRI group did not cease its provocations, it was finally impossible even for those who followed the already mentioned leader to return to classes normally.

Counter-productive provocation

It was one of these provocations, perpetrated by URO's minions on October 26 and 27 in one of the towns bordering the city, that detonated the major provocation of the occupation of the federal forces. Of the three deaths, the first was that of a US Indymedia journalist and anarchist activist, Bradley Will, so the press of the neighbouring northern country began to take an interest in the subject. For Bush, it was obvious that the life of one of his citizens was more valuable than those of the more than ten Mexican dead who had been victims of the murderous repression. In the same way that the 2,500 US soldiers killed in Iraq have more press coverage than the 600,000 Iraqis who have died as a result of Bush's occupation.

From October 27 to 29, the federal government used 5,000 federal police to take the city of Oaxaca, accompanied by judicial minions, paramilitary PRI members, federal agents of investigation and policemen supplied with light tanks, helicopters and all the equipment typical of these events.

After five months of confrontations with URO's police, more than ten dead and tens of wounded, occupations with barricades, meetings and marches, in Oaxaca, Mexico City and across the nation, a period of emancipatory potentialities but also of ominous reactionary dangers has opened.

[<https://internationalviewpoint.org/IMG/jpg/mora2.jpg>]