

SocialistAppeal

Insurgent Mexico:

electoral fraud sparks revolutionary struggle

Mexico is roaring like a lion. The country is in revolt like it has never been since the revolutionary peasants' war of Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata almost 100 years ago.

The July 2 elections were marked by massive fraud against Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador (AMLO) of the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD). In thousands of polling stations there were more votes than registered voters, evidence of vote stuffing and vote dumping.

The masses of Mexican workers and peasants had seen a vote for AMLO as a way of getting rid of the right wing policies of president Fox of the PAN. These policies of privatisation, attacks on workers rights and opening up of the Mexican economy to US multinationals, have impoverished millions of Mexicans, forcing many to emigrate to the US, while a small minority have become multimillionaires.

Neither the Mexican ruling class nor Washington could allow AMLO to come to power. Not so much because of his policies, but rather because of their fear that his election would unleash a mass revolutionary movement similar to that of Venezuela.

The electoral fraud, nevertheless, had precisely that effect. Mass rallies in July, first of 700,000, then 1.5 million, culminated in a massive demonstration of 3 million people on July 31st. After that a vast tent camp was established in the centre of Mexico City which has become an enormous school for political education.

AMLO has declared that the country's institutions are at the service of a small minority of the rich and powerful and that he will not recognise PAN candidate Calderon as the new president of Mexico.

On September 6, the Electoral Tribunal noted election irregularities prior to the election and during the count, but still declared right wing candidate Calderon as the new Mexican president.

Now AMLO has called for a National Democratic Convention on Saturday Sept. 16 (Mexico's independence day), so that the people of Mexico can elect a legitimate government. They are expecting a million delegates from all over the country to attend. This is an unprecedented challenge to the institutions of capitalist "democracy" in Mexico and can lead to a situation of dual power, where the capitalist state can no longer rule because of the movement of the masses, and the workers and poor have created their own state organisations. On the same day a military parade has been scheduled to take place on the same route as the convention.

Meanwhile, in the state of Oaxaca, repression

against a teachers' strike has created an insurrectionary situation. A Popular Assembly of the People of Oaxaca (APPO) was set up and has declared as its aim to be the only legitimate power in the state. Through mass mobilisations and general strikes, the APPO has effectively taken over the city of Oaxaca. They have set up self-defence committees, taken control of the media, issued decrees about public transport, the running of the economy and the need for the movement to spread nationwide. A situation of dual power exists in Oaxaca.

All this underlines the profound character of the movement in Mexico. This is the most important revolutionary crisis the country has lived through since the Mexican revolution in 1910.

And all this is happening next door to the United States, where the ruling class is extremely worried. In the spring we saw the magnificent movement of Latino immigrant workers in the US (85% of them Mexicans). There is no doubt that revolutionary events in Mexico could spread right into the heart of American imperialism!

The comrades of the Marxist Tendency 'Militante', part of the International Marxist Tendency, have been intervening actively in the movement. They are reporting a massive increase in interest in Marxist ideas and their paper has had a whole series of special editions and increased print runs.

The Mexican ruling class has a long tradition of ruthlessness and political assassinations. Already a number of leading activists of the APPO have been assassinated. Now a campaign has been launched in the bourgeois media to try to criminalise the revolutionary movement. Two organisations have been singled out for attack: the APPO and the Marxist Tendency Militante, both accused of being linked with "urban terrorism". These false accusations are clearly destined to prepare public opinion for repression.

The revolutionary events in Mexico, which are part of the developing revolution throughout Latin America, are an inspiration for workers and activists around the world. We need to report them to activists in Britain, since the media are keeping their usual deafening silence. It is also our duty to do our utmost to defend the comrades against repression. Above all we make an appeal to all those who agree with our ideas to join Socialist Appeal and the International Marxist Tendency in the struggle for socialism.

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With PHIL MITCHISON speaking

Saturday Oct 7th, 1pm - 4:30

Calthorpe Arms

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