

## What attitude should the APPO take towards the National Democratic Convention?

Contributed by Militante Mexico -- [www.militante.org](http://www.militante.org)  
Friday, 01 September 2006

The struggle of the Oaxacan workers is the most advanced political movement in Mexico. To put it clearly: there is a revolutionary process taking place in the City of Oaxaca, which has brought APPO (Popular Assembly of the People of Oaxaca) to power. And although it is true that this power must still be perfected and extended to the whole of Oaxaca, it is a fact that the bourgeois state is no longer in power in the city [of four million inhabitants], and that even within some sections of the police, the authority of APPO is much greater than that of the bourgeoisie.

The responsibility of APPO towards the struggles of the Mexican working class as a whole is very important. We can say without exaggeration that there is no political process taking place in the country today that does not depend in a direct or indirect way on the policy of APPO.

Differences and Similarities

The National Democratic Convention (CND) called for by Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador (AMLO) in response to the huge scope of the movement against the electoral fraud is also one of the most important expressions of the class struggle in Mexico.

Although this is an initiative that is only just getting off the ground, it is almost certain that the masses will see it as another opportunity to struggle against the ruling class (though this by no means excludes the possibility that other struggles will erupt and become the vanguard of the movement).

In this sense, there are many similarities between APPO and the CND. Both these organizations have as their aim the bringing together of a whole series of demands of the working class in general, which range from combatting corruption to improving the workers' living conditions.

More importantly, both these initiatives call into question the existing regime. It is true that they have mostly focused their harsh criticisms on the superstructure of society, above all on the state, but this has pushed the working class, the motor force of these initiatives, to move ever more clearly towards the need for a social revolution.

However, one of the differences that exists at this stage is the method by which these demands can be achieved.

Pushed forward by a powerful movement of the masses, APPO has a social base that now goes well beyond the teachers that began the struggle - they have the entire working class of the capital city (Oaxaca City), as well as of many other municipalities. It is this social base that adds strength to APPO, with around one thousand barricades raised every night from 9pm to dawn, with security detachments of three to five dozen workers, youth, housewives, children, etc., to protect against new attacks by the counter-revolution.

As an organ of working class struggle, APPO has developed to such a point that it holds power, at least in Oaxaca City.

On the other hand, the CND's social base is nationwide. It has developed in a heterogeneous fashion, and also exhibits elements of dual power, but which still needs to be developed further.

According to AMLO's declarations, the CND will have as its task the "profound transformation of society". This is precisely the focus given to the CND by the masses engaged in the struggle against electoral fraud.

In practice, this demand, under current conditions, means the seizure of power by the workers organized around the CND. In order to make this slogan a reality, it is necessary to follow the path of the Oaxacan workers: to prepare a revolutionary general strike in order to defeat the existing government; to seize the means of communication of the ruling class and place them under the democratic control of the workers; to arm ourselves to defend this nascent power; and to form a revolutionary government on the basis of the entire working class.

So far, the two main points distinguishing the CND from APPO has been on the one hand its lower level of development and on the other its more widespread influence. This can, however, change in a short period of time if the CND campaigns for its demands energetically.  
The danger of sectarianism in APPO

Although the leadership of APPO is not homogeneous, there is a significant section that is opposed to participating in the CND, as it sees it simply as a means of bringing AMLO to the presidency. And although it is true that this is the main aim of those that convened the CND, this result would itself be full of revolutionary significance for AMLO's millions of followers, who see in his presidency the possibility of a genuine improvement in their miserable living conditions.

Even if the CND were to remain limited only to this single objective, it would still lead to a confrontation between millions of workers, youth, unemployed, etc., not only against the Fox government, but against the entire bourgeois state. Such an experience would take the movement against the electoral fraud along the same path the workers of Oaxaca have taken - but on a truly national level. This is more than enough of a reason for APPO to participate in the CND with a revolutionary policy, extending its experience to the movement as a whole.

The participation of APPO is of vital importance: it could become the key to extending the revolutionary movement to the whole of the country. Likewise, its non-participation could have a very negative effect: it could lead to a dangerous process of isolation. Isolation is a life or death question for any revolutionary process.

In reality, there are no contradictions between the objectives of the CND and APPO. APPO could show the CND the way forward to the taking of power by the working class: on the basis of workers' democracy and a complete break with capitalism. These last two demands have not yet been taken up by APPO as a whole, but it is vital that they be taken up if the movement is not to be thrown backwards.

Today more than ever, the only alternative is to fight for socialism. Any other "intermediate" path would ultimately mean a return to the past. In the words of singer Alfredo Zitarroza, "Someone that does not change everything, changes nothing."

All power to APPO!  
For a democratic congress of delegates of APPO!  
For a Revolutionary National Democratic Convention!

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