



Center for Convivial  
Research & Autonomy

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As a small collective dedicated to collective pedagogies, the CCRA currently claims a number of interconnected projects that weave together innovative, community-centered research, learning, and local capacity-building. The CCRA's investment in co-learning spaces generates critical analytical skills, research tools, facilitation techniques, and community service strategies able to address the intersections of environmental regeneration, community well-being, community safety, food sovereignty, and community health. For more info: [ccra@mitotedigital.org](mailto:ccra@mitotedigital.org)

By now most everyone is familiar with the treacherous attack by government supported Central Independiente de Obreros Agrícolas y Campesinos Histórica (Cioac-H) paramilitaries on the Junta de Buen Gobierno (JBG) in La Realidad resulting in the serious injury of fifteen compañer@s and the assassination of *compañero* Galeano. This most recent criminal act continues the Mexican government's investment in Low Intensity Conflict through the use of military force, economic aid, misinformation, and media disinformation to attempt to contain the successes of Zapatismo more generally and the achievements of the EZLN and the support bases throughout Chiapas specifically. While the counter insurgency efforts directed against the Zapatistas have been well documented over the years by the Zapatistas themselves through various communiques, interviews, media interventions, *marchas*, *consultas*, and a variety of *encuentros*, this most recent attack speaks directly to the success of the Escuelita and the most recent phase of Zapatista autonomy. The denunciations by the JBG, communiques from Sub Comandante Marcos and Sub Comandante Moises, and the independent report by Fray Bartolome de las Casas: Centro de Derechos Humanos, Chiapas (FrayBa) all recount an orchestrated plan of

attack designed to draw the Zapatista Juntas de Buen Gobierno and the Zapatistas into a military response that can be used as a pretext for a Mexican government final solution directed against the EZLN, the Zapatista support bases, and the caracoles.

The current national and international response to the provocations executed by the CIOAC paramilitary forces intended to disrupt the recent success of the *escuelitas* and *caracoles* echoes the earlier outpouring of support from the Zapatista solidarity community in 1995. All of over the world prominent individuals, groups, organizations, and, most importantly, adherents to the Sixth Declaration and participants in the Zapatista *escuelitas* mobilized to expose the most recent attack against the Zapatistas and the success of Zapatista autonomy. The intensity of the mobilization reverberated here in the Bay Area with a number of efforts that were part of a week of direct actions converging in a variety of street mobilizations, including a protest on May 22 in front of the Mexican consulate and a *mitote*. The *mitote* convened a number of groups to reflect on the most recent attack but to do so by also recalling the current efforts underway to implement the wisdoms garnered at the Zapatista *escuelita*. The *mitote* hosted compañer@s from

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across the Bay as well as from La Otra Tijuana and [Rebeldía Zapatista](#) to share struggles across regions and compare different efforts to pursue Zapatismo locally. In addition, a number of local projects such as [Radio Autonomía](#) dedicated to Zapatismo circulated information creating a profound sense of community --a community that accepts the *cargo*, or obligation, to enact Zapatismo locally in a variety of ways and to share that struggle.

Probably less well-known has been the specificity of the Zapatista response. Of

course, much attention has been focused on the metamorphosis of Subcomandante Marcos into Subcomandante Galeano. Marcos' past performance and present execution as a political strategy to engage the West, including the media, the government, and the less patient Left, speaks to a Zapatista triumph in representing their struggle. It also reveals the Zapatista commitment to take the time to discover a device that advances their autonomy while also working as a vehicle to share their successes. Less examined has been the Zapatista success investigating the incident. The careful execution of the Zapatista investigation into this most recent provocation speaks to a longer history of Zapatista research into the racial regimes and class antagonisms of neoliberal capital. In this instance, the series of communiqués issued by the Zapatistas provides a specific analysis of counter insurgency, suggests a strategy to manage these most recent provocations, and invites the participation of the larger Zapatista solidarity community to engage autonomy at a critical moment in a variety of ways.

Most importantly, the demonstration of the sophistication of Zapatista investigations echoes the grassroots efforts of self-organized communities to conduct their own research into all manner of neoliberal violence they have been forced to confront. All across the Bay Area and throughout the state, for example, members of our community have been taken from us by police and community violence. Many argue that in some Bay Area communities the police operate more as an occupying force than a community service. We have become increasingly aware that the hard-won infrastructure of civilian oversight has had little to no impact in curbing police excess. The court system has been all too eager to negotiate deals to manage heavy case loads overlooking systemic occurrences of wrongful convictions. In an era of mass incarceration, militarized policing, and targeted detentions and deportations, the growing phenomenon of police violence continues alongside our efforts to confront

each tragic loss to our community. Individuals, groups, organizations, and networks not only remember those taken from us while supporting families who demand justice -- committed to putting an end to police excess in our communities. To confront the complex violence at the intersection of mass incarceration and militarized policing many people have begun to invest in efforts to investigate and document police violence in order to share this knowledge across communities; inform larger publics about on-going cases of police excess, mobilize resources to secure justice, and to prevent future incidents. Although we insist on confronting each injustice, we have become increasingly aware that we can no longer address this issue one shooting, in-custody death, wrongful stop, administrative detention, and illegal beating at a time. Our efforts must focus on a broader, collective effort of community safety -- a project authored and organized by ourselves, refusing to rely on the police to reform themselves or the courts to take care of us.

The Zapatista success in autonomy and their willingness to share it raises a number of questions for us locally. How must we respond to the recent and increasingly common police shootings from San Jose to Manteca, from Salinas to Stockton where members of our community have been targeted by paramilitary forces, often in the guise of local police, who target *compañeros* such as Antonio Guzman Lopez (San Jose), Osman Hernandez (Salinas), and Carlos Mejia (Salinas) for death. These *compañeros* were guilty of encountering police forces who could not see them. Who did not recognize the implements in their hands --all three gripped workman's tools at the moment of their being gunned down. These killings evidence strategies of an ongoing low intensity war waged across Greater Mexico. Communities continue to respond to these killings with forms of rebellion, protest, documentation, analysis, and assembly.

## "HACIA LA ESPERANZA"<sup>1</sup> THE JUNTA DE BUEN GOBIERNO

Caracol I  
Mother Of The Caracoles  
Sea Of Our Dreams

La Realidad, Chiapas, Mexico

MAY 5, 2014

### PUBLIC DENUNCIATION

To National and International Civil Society  
To the Students of the Little School  
To the Compañeras and Compañeros of the Sixth in Mexico  
And in the World  
To the Independent Human Rights Organizations  
To the Alternative Media  
To the National and International Press

To all Honest People in Mexico and the World

Compañeros and compañeras, brothers and sisters, we vehemently denounce the CIOAC paramilitaries organized by the three levels of the bad government against our bases of support of the Zapatista Army for National Liberation --EZLN.

On March 16 of this year, as we were carrying out an autonomous health drive with our Zapatista communities in the autonomous municipality of General Emiliano Zapata, headquartered in Amador Hernández, the CIOAC paramilitaries from La Realidad detained the Junta de Buen Gobierno's truck which was transporting medications for our campaign. They used the pretext of objecting to the two loads of gravel that our compañero bases of support in La Realidad were supplying for the construction of a dormitory

for the health promoters working in the autonomous municipal health clinic in the municipality of San Pedro Michoacana, headquartered in La Realidad.

1. The pretext: before, there had been an agreement about how the gravel could be used. But the paramilitaries of La Realidad have been using it to construct the chicken coops and pigpens that the bad government gives them as part of the dignified housing program, so now the paramilitaries do not allow our compañeros to use this gravel; this was their pretext.

The paramilitaries, organized by the three levels of bad government in preparation for a counterinsurgency campaign, tried to provoke our Zapatista compañeros by acting against the Junta de Buen Gobierno, because instead of detaining the truck that transported the gravel, they detained the vehicle that was working in the service of the health of thousands of Zapatistas. They never intended to understand or resolve the situation. The leaders of the CIOAC paramilitaries are the comisariado ejidal Javier López Rodríguez, paramilitary agente Carmelino Rodríguez Jiménez, Jaime Rodríguez Gómez, Eduardo Santiz Santiz, Álvaro Santiz Rodríguez, and Oscar Rodríguez Gómez.

This was just a pretext for provocation, because there is a community agreement that the gravel is communal. The CIOAC paramilitaries of La Realidad are using that gravel to build the pigpens that the bad government calls dignified housing.

And so the compañeros thought that they also had the right to use it.

The paramilitaries of La Realidad are paid, organized, led, and trained by the three levels of bad government to divide and provoke the Zapatista people and the Zapatista autonomous government; this time they distorted the issue at hand and went after the Junta de Buen Gobierno.

As the Junta, we wanted to resolve the situation, but they never wanted to come to an understanding, because it was the leaders of the CIOAC paramilitaries of La Realidad that brought their people against the Junta de Buen Gobierno, and as such the situation could not be resolved. They dragged the Junta de Buen Gobierno's truck to their ejidal house and it is still in their hands today.

2. As the Junta de Buen Gobierno, we believed that we had an understanding with the other paramilitary leaders from the CIOAC-Histórico, which is to say the paramilitary leaders Luis Hernández, José Antonio Vázquez Hernández, Roberto Alfaro Velasco, Alfredo Cruz Calvo, Juan Carlos López Calvo, Romeo Jiménez Rodríguez, Víctor García López, Conrado Hernández Pérez, Gustavo Morales López, and Roberto Méndez Vázquez, and accompanied by some of their militants such as Adrián López Velásquez, Cesar Hernández Santiz from the community Victoria la paz; Bernardo Román Méndez, Enrique Méndez Méndez, who are from the Ejido Miguel Hidalgo; Misael Jiménez Pérez, Vidal Jiménez Pérez, Marconi Jiménez Pérez from

Guadalupe Tepeyac; and Ismael García Pérez from San José la esperanza. And there are other accomplices who work from another site, including Gilberto Jiménez Hernández, Delmar Jiménez Jiménez, and Gerardo Hernández Pérez, the three paramilitary bosses who operate in Guadalupe Tepeyac.

There are others from Guadalupe los Altos including Julio Rodríguez Aguilar, Carmellino Rodríguez Aguilar, Ranulfo Hernández Aguilar and Alejandro Vázquez; from San Carlos Veracruz including Gaudencio Jiménez jimenez who works in the municipal presidency of Las Margaritas; and Gabriel Grene Hernández, Isauro Méndez Santiz, Ivan Méndez Domínguez, Fidel Méndez Zantiz, and Alfredo Méndez Rodríguez, from Veracruz annexed to San Carlos.

3. Knowing the attitudes of the CIOAC paramilitary leaders, which is to say Los Luises gang, we first went to the Human Rights Organization Fray Bartolomé de las Casas. We explained the acts of provocation against us, and "Frayba" explained it to Los Luises and gave them a summons with the date of March 31. There was a first summons, and then a second, and a third. The response was that if the summons was for the problems with the CIOAC from Guadalupe los Altos, Santa Rosa el Copan, Diez de Abril, San Francisco or San Jose el Puente, then that isn't their problem. Frayba explained the situation around the summons and, moreover, the summons itself specifies the problem with the CIOAC paramilitaries in la Realidad, but they didn't present themselves.

4. We again sent a second summons through Frayba and the response was that they were going to come, but they never did.

Seeing this with concern, we had to go to the Frayba offices to explain more fully the reason for the call and that they should go directly to tell the Luises, the paramilitary leaders. Not until the third citation was sent did they come. We asked for Frayba's presence as a witness for a peaceful solution and they set the date of the meeting for May 1 of this year.

5. The first to arrive were Roberto Alfaro Velasco, secretary of the CIOAC, and Alfredo Cruz Calvo, their secretary of transportation. One of them, Alfredo Cruz Calvo, went to talk to his CIOAC paramilitary compañeros in La Realidad, and he returned to tell us, the members of the Junta de Buen Gobierno, that they hadn't understood – exactly as they have been taught to act. They proposed to us that they would go and talk to some of the other paramilitary leaders in La Realidad, but that was backbiting trickery because they didn't go talk to the paramilitaries in La Realidad – they went to speak with the paramilitary boss of Los Luises. When Alfredo returned, after supposedly having gone to talk to the paramilitaries in La Realidad, he brought fifteen people with him telling us that we had to free Roberto Alfaro. In other words, he didn't come to address the problem but to tell us that one of them was going to stay to talk to the leaders in La Realidad.

Once the discussion began, it was made clear to them that Roberto Alfaro had neither been kidnapped nor detained. The fifteen people they brought were the ones forcing Roberto Alfaro to say that he had been kidnapped and detained, and Frayba was a witness to all of this; they were there the whole time. Roberto Alfaro asked those fifteen people to go talk to the paramilitaries in La Realidad but they refused. On May 2 we were about to reach an agreement at about five or six in the evening to establish another dialogue the following day. But those fifteen and the paramilitary head of Los Luises were already organizing something else outside. On the evening of May 2 the Zapatista compañeros bases of support were arriving to our Caracol to work on other zone projects, and these paramilitaries were planning an ambush at the entrance to the community in order to attack our compañeros.

The paramilitaries in La Realidad already had a plan organized. They had split into two groups—one at the entrance to the community and the other in the middle of the community. They had both long and short weapons—machetes, clubs, and rocks. Before they carried out the murder, they began their provocations by destroying our compañeros autonomous school and cut the water piping that supplied water to our Zapatista bases of support and to the center of the caracol. We saw and heard it happen. As this was happening, the compañeros were arriving to work on other zone projects, and immediately the La Realidad paramilitaries ambushed the entrance road to the community and began attacking our compañeros with rocks and clubs, destroying the trucks' windshields. Our compañeros managed to get out of the trucks however they could and defended themselves. We as Junta de Buen Gobierno were informed immediately that our compañeros were being attacked, and other compañeros who were working in the caracol came out to help, but they were unable to reach them. They were attacked with firearms in the middle of the community, and that is where our compañero José Luís Solís López fell; he was a zone level teacher in our Little School "Freedom According to the Zapatistas." He was shot in the right leg and the right side of the chest with a .22 caliber bullet, cut across the mouth with a machete, and received a coup de grace to the back of the head with a weapon of the same caliber. He had also been clubbed many times on the back.

Many other compañeros sustained injuries from bullets, machetes, clubs, and rocks:

- Romeo Jimenez López, shot twice: once in the right leg and another in the left leg with a .22 caliber bullet.
- Andulio Gómez López, grazed in the chest with a .22 caliber bullet.
- The compañero Abacuc Jimenez López, struck by a machete blow to the right arm.
- The compañero Yadiel Jimenez López, struck by a machete blow, also to the right arm.
- The compañero Efraín, struck by a rock blow to the head.
- The compañero Gerardo, struck by a rock blow to the mouth.

- The compañero Ignacio, struck by a rock blow to his right hand and to his brow.
- The compañero Esau, struck by a rock blow to his brow.
- The compañero Noe, struck by a rock blow to his head.
- The compañero Saul, struck by a rock blow to his right arm.
- The compañero Elder Darinel, various blows to his neck.
- The compañero Hector, struck by a rock blow to his eye.
- The compañero Marin, struck by a rock blow to his mouth, destroying his teeth.
- The compañero Nacho, struck by a machete blow to his hand and eye.
- The compañero Jairo, struck with blows to his back.

Our compañeros were transported to our hospital-school "La Primera Esperanza Compañero Pedro" for medical attention.

6. We adamantly refute that we were armed. If that had been the case, the outcome would have been different. This took place at 8:30pm on May 2.

That little mob of paramilitary leaders—those fifteen who were with us—were told to go outside and control their people, but none of them would go.

7. Today, May 5, we see that the bad government in Chiapas had detained five people. One of them is a CIOAC paramilitary leader, Conrado Hernández Pérez; we don't know the others. But they know exactly who they are, especially their paramilitary head, Manuel Velasco Cuello, and their supreme paramilitary-in-chief, Peña Nieto. However, those murderous paramilitary criminals who took the life of our compañero José Luís Solís López, and shot him coup de grace style have not been detained. They are still in La Realidad, keeping up their provocations, and they will continue to do so because this is the plan of the supreme paramilitary-in-chief, the top paramilitary in Chiapas, and the paramilitary bosses of CIOAC.

8. As you can see from what we've recounted, the Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas Human Rights Center was present at every moment. This is why we did not put out our own statement on what took place quickly. Out of respect for their mediation role and impartial perspective, we waited for Frayba to issue its neutral account, the way it does with all the issues it handles. In Frayba's statement you can see directly who is lying and what the truth is, according to those who were present but did not belong to any of the groups involved.

9. Now it can be clearly seen that everything that the paid press reported is a lie. There was never a confrontation. There was an attack against us.

10. In light of this problem and the cowardly murder of our compañero Galeano, the Junta de Buen Gobierno has decided to withdraw its participation and hand the entire issue over to the General Command of the Zapatista Army for National Liberation so that it can take charge of the

investigation and help bring about justice. Now we have to wait for what our EZLN compañeros have to say.

Sincerely

Junta De Buen Gobierno

Hacia La Esperanza

Zona Selva Fronteriza

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## Notes

1. Mark Accessed from Enlace Zapatista <<http://enlacezapatista.ezln.org.mx/2014/05/11/the-good-government-council-hacia-la-esperanza-vehemently-denounces-the-cioac-paramilitaries-organized-by-the-three-levels-of-bad-government-against-our-bases-of-support-of-the-zapat/>> on May 20, 2014.

## FRAGMENTS OF LA REALIDAD I.<sup>2</sup>

May 2014.

The wee hours of the morning... it must be like 2 or 3 o'clock, who knows. It sounds like silence here in La Realidad. Did I say "it sounds like silence?" Well it does, because the silence here has its own sound, like the chirping of crickets; some sounds up front, stronger and dissonant; and others always constant, below. There is no light nearby. And now the rain is adding its own silence. The rainy season has arrived here already, but it is not yet heavy enough to wound the earth. Just enough to scratch it a little, a constant pitter-patter. A little scratch here, barely a puddle over there. As if to give a warning. But the sun, the heat,<sup>3</sup> hardens the earth quickly. It is not time for mud; not yet. It is the time of shadow. True, it's always the time of shadow. It goes anywhere and everywhere, without regard for time. Even where the sun is the most ferocious, the shadow can still be found, clinging to walls, trees, rocks, people. As if the light gave it even more strength. Ah, but night... in the earliest hours of the morning, this is truly the time of [the] shadow. Just as during the day it brings you relief, in the tiny hours of the morning it awakens you as if to say, "and what about you? Where are you?" And you stammer in your slumber, until you can answer clearly—answer to yourself—"in reality."

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(...)

"Well, I wouldn't know, to tell you the truth. Supposedly in the city there is a custom, a way of doing things we could say, that when there is a death in the family, the other family members and friends visit the family to let them know they support them in their pain. They call it 'offering condolences' I think. Yes, that's it, to tell them that they are not alone.

(...)

"Ok, from what I have read, the majority of the students of the little school said that they felt at home, that they had been treated like family. Well, some said they had been treated even better than in their families. That is, as they

say, there are families and then there are families, for example in...

(...)

"Could be. Yes, it could be that some feel the need to come and give condolences to the family of the deceased Galeano, or to the *compas* here, or both.

(...)

"It isn't that easy, because here is very far away for them. What would it be, maybe some seven hours from San Cristóbal? So you see, it's far. And a violent death doesn't give us any advance warning, it doesn't have its calendar or its geography marked, it just comes in and sits down, uninvited. Yes, it enters by tearing down the door.

It isn't like death from old age or illness, that slowly slips in with a foot, then a hand, and soon it is sitting there in a corner, waiting, until it gets comfortable and says, "here, I rule." And so one can prepare oneself, get used to the idea. But not with violent death. Violent death comes like a blow, it knocks you down, stuns you, kicks you, clubs you, slashes you, shoots you, kills you, puts a bullet in your head and then mocks you. That's how it works.

So if you make a plan, as they say, for a "sharing" or an exchange, or a meeting, or for courses at the Zapatista Little School, then you can say that it will be on this day in this place, and you let people know in advance, and each person, in their place, also makes their plan regarding work or school or family, and they arrange their trip. And you too use this time to prepare for where you will house them and what you will offer them.

But because violence gives no warning, there is no time to prepare anything, not who will come nor who will receive them. And then, what is there to say? Even if you are all there together, looking at each other, the sound of the silence quiets you, as if death had not only taken the deceased, but your words also.

So it is difficult for you to come, but not because you don't want to, or not because you don't love Galeano or the

*compas* in La Realidad, but because it is hard to find a way to get here.

What's more, where would we have these people stay, this *caracol* being very small and surrounded once again by paramilitaries? And what would we give them to eat? And what about the bathrooms, if twenty-five or fifty of them need to go, or if they want to bathe because of the heat<sup>4</sup> or the rain?

(...)

Ah, yes, and if the visitors brought their own food and their own tent for the rain, well that would change things a little, but not much, because as the health promoter already explained, we have to care for, as they say, hygiene, and make sure they don't turn this into, as they say, a pigsty. Because there are people you know who are really dirty, who always miss the toilet, above all the fucking guys. Because as women we are...

Huh? Yes, its important for preventing illness. Yes, like cholera. Huh? No, the other cholera, fury, rage.

(...)

What? No, good visitors tell us ahead of time that they are coming; they don't just show up. When a visitor comes without warning, they call them, or used to call them, "*gorrón*," or "*gorrona*," as the case may be. I don't know why they called them that, or still call them that, but they are referring to the people who show up without being invited, the ones who, as they say, invited themselves. Yes, death is like a "*gorrón*" or "*gorrona*," as the case may be, like a visitor who shows up without warning, who didn't ask if they could come. Yes, I know that it isn't exactly the same thing, but that's what came to mind

(...)

Yes, I think that if you give them a particular day, then some will come, not all of them, but some. Because even though they don't all come, they are there in another way. Like "listeners," but in reverse.

Because death can also be defeated with another calendar and another geography. Why do I say "also"? Oh, I know what I am saying. Pay me no mind right now. Maybe another day I will explain to you... or you will see.

(...)

How many? I have no idea, but it could be many, depending, because over there I see that they are putting up another shelter, and sweeping and cleaning. Yes, as if they are expecting visitors.

(...)

When exactly? Well, ask Emiliano or Max, or SubMoi who I saw over there speaking with a young woman who is from here. He was on his way to talk to the *comités* [CCRI].

(...)

Me? Well, I'm waiting. When the *comités* from the zone come to an agreement, I'm sure they'll tell me write something and that's what I'll do.

(...)

Look!... There!... that little light over there. Did you see what a strange animal that is? Yes it looks like a dog... or rather a cat. Yes like a cat-dog. Strange, no?

(...)

Yes, it's true, reality is strange.

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Fragment from Page 4 of the Investigative Report of the assassination of *compañero* Galeano. Questioning of *compañera* S., Zapatista, base of support from La Realidad, age 16 going on 17 years old. May 11, 2014.

(Warning: the following text contains language that may offend the sensibilities of the European royalty and those that aspire to the throne. Between us, it's nothing that isn't heard in any corner of the world below. Here goes).

"Today is May 11, 2014.

(...)

We have a *compañera* present here who is going to tell us what was said to her, rather, what one person in particular said; the other didn't actually say anything. This is what the *compañera* is going to tell us about.

Go ahead, *compañera*.

*Compañera* S: Well you see, *compa* Subcomandante Insurgente Moisés, I am going to tell you what this murderer said to me.

SCIM: When was it that he said this to you?

*Compañera* S: It was Saturday.

SCIM: May 10?

*Compañera* S: May 10.

Compañera S: At about 9.

SCIM: 9 in the morning?

Compañera S: Yes, at about 9 he said to me: “You’re really full of yourself,” but I didn’t want to answer him. Then he said “stop,” and I stopped.

“Listen to what I’m going to say to you,” he said; I stopped.

SCIM: And what is this man’s name?

Compañera S: His name is R.

SCIM: R. Ok, continue.

Compañera S: He said to me, “listen to what I am going to tell you,” and I listened.

He said: “Enjoy your *caracol*. Enjoy it now because we’re going to take it; that *caracol* is going to be ours very soon. With glee I’m going to build my house there when it’s ours. Very soon we’re going to take it.

I answered him: “Well if that’s the case, if you feel like such a man, if you’ve got such a big cock and balls, that dead or alive you’re going to take the *caracol*, then go ahead and take it if you have the balls.”

And he said to me: “I do have the balls and the cock, you want to see?”

And I answered: “If you want to show it, show it to your mother.” That’s what I said.

Then he said: “Are you so angry because we killed your husband?”

And I said: “That *compañero* isn’t our husband. That *compañero* is our *compañero* in struggle, in the struggle for our communities, not for measly handouts from the government.”

And he started to laugh with his friend who was with him, and he said...

SCIM: What was his friend’s name?

Compañera S: M.

He told me: “The ones we are going to get our hands on are Raúl, Jorge, and René. Once we get our hands on them we’re going to kill them like we killed *la peluda* (Note: “*La peluda*” is the derogatory name with which the CIOAC-H paramilitaries refer to *compañero* Galeano).

I told him that if they were going to do it to go ahead and do it, to try it, but to come into the *caracol*. Not when there aren’t any people there, like they did in the school—they went in there because there wasn’t anybody there. I told

him: “if you’re really men, take the *caracol*.” And they laughed and said: “You should be happy we didn’t kill your father.”

SCIM: That’s what he said to you?

Compañera S: Yes.

“We didn’t kill your father, but we will next time.”

And I responded: “Why didn’t you kill him?”

“Well, we didn’t see him.”

“Well, if you’re going to do it, do it. He’s in the *caracol*, that’s where he is.

That was when he said: “You know who killed *la peluda*?”

And I responded: “How am I going to know if I wasn’t there when they killed our *compañero*?”

He said: “It was me who killed him. I shot him in the head and sent him to hell. And that’s what we’re going to do when we get our hands on the others —the ones I already mentioned to you, that’s what we’re going to do to them. But each will have his moment. You know what? We’re fed up with you all.” This is what he said to me. “Because what you’re doing isn’t fair. We’re fed up with it.”

But I responded: “We’re the ones who are fed up with what you all are doing. Even more so when we found out what you did to our *compañero*. We *compañeras* went to pick up the body; that’s when we got really fucking fed up.”

And that’s when they laughed.

“Of course, because they are all your husbands,” he said to me.

SCIM: And when they were making fun, what was it that he was saying about what they do, that they do what they say, no? Didn’t he say something about the *Junta de Buen Gobierno*? Or didn’t he say something about...”

(inaudible).

SCIM: Okay.

Compañera S: He said: “We are going to kill them, break them once and for all. You all are the *Junta de Buen Gobierno*, you are good governments, whatever we do to you, you’re not going to do anything in response. Why? Because you are good governments.

I said to him: “Yes, of course we are good governments, but not that good.”

“But what are you all going to do to me? Even if you know exactly who killed him, you’re not going to do anything to us because you’re the *Junta de Buen Gobierno* that protects

everyone. I'm not scared," he said. "I'm not scared, that's why I'm telling you that I killed him."

And I answered: "I wish that were the case. When your day comes I hope you posture like the tough guy you're posturing with me right now."

"That is what I'm going to do. But when? That day isn't going to come," he said. "Because you all are the *Junta de Buen Gobierno*, you are good governments and you're not going to do anything to us."

SCIM: Anything else you remember about what he said to you? You had said something about him laughing and cackling.

*Compañera S*: Yes, he laughed and his friend was yelling, but didn't say anything.

SCIM: M didn't speak, he just laughed?

*Compañera S*: He didn't say anything, he just laughed. M was there, he poked the other guy's back so that he wouldn't say anything else.

SCIM: Ah. He poked him?

*Compañera S*: Yes, he poked his back and they started yelling. He said: "You should go on your way, go do your errand." I didn't respond to him.

SCIM: Okay, if later on you remember anything else he said to you, we can do some more work here. This is to keep gathering information, because in this case that guy himself said what happened.

*Compañera S*: Yes.

SCIM: And he himself had tried to cover it up. So you say that he had asked you if you knew who killed *compañero* Galeano. And then he says he did it, right?

*Compañera S*: Yes.

SCIM: "And he says he shot him in the head."

*Compañera S*: "That he shot him in the head and that finished him off."

SCIM: Okay *compañera*. What is your name in the struggle?

*Compañera S*: My name is S.

SCIM: S?

*Compañera S*: yes.

SCIM: Okay *compañera*. That's what we wanted, so that it is clear that the testimony is direct, because you are from here, from La Realidad. What was your work when you went to the "sharing" or exchange in Oventik?

*Compañera S*: Listener

(Note: "Listener" is a job or a commission or a *cargo* given to some *compañeras* and *compañeros* that consists of "listening" to what is said in one of the "sharings" or exchanges and then recounting it to their community, region, and zone. This is so that what happens in the exchange isn't limited to those attending, but is heard by all of the Zapatistas. It would be like the equivalent of "narrator." The *compas* select young people to be the "listeners" who have a good memory, understand Spanish well, and can explain in their own languages what was said. The exchange with National Indigenous Congress (CNI) already had dozens of young people from the various zones assigned as "listeners." The idea was that whatever the *compas* from the indigenous peoples of the CNI said would be heard by all of the Zapatista bases of support.)

SCIM: Ah, yes, yes, yes. The exchange that was going to take place with the National Indigenous Congress. Very good. That will be all, *compañera S*. Thank you.

(inaudible)

SCIM: Oh wait. When you talked to this guy R, was he drunk or sober?

*Compañera S*: No. I got pretty close but I didn't smell alcohol. And when I got to L's house, the same guy passed by on his way home. He looked at me and turned around and laughed. I looked at him with anger in my face.

SCIM: So we could say that he was sober when he said what he said to you? He wasn't drunk then.

*Compañera S*: No, he wasn't drunk.

SCIM: Okay, that's all *compañera*. Thank you.

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Another night, in the wee hours of the morning. Subcomandante Insurgente Moisés comes and tells me:

“The decision is made. The agreement is that the arrival will be Friday May 23, the homage for *compa* Galeano will be Saturday May 24, and Sunday May 25 everybody goes home. The bases of support that is.”

“And for those from outside our communities?” I ask.

“Same, but for those from outside, tell them the same applies as for the bases of support: everybody brings their own food and place to sleep.”

“So I should make it a communiqué or a letter or what?”

“Whatever you think, but make it clear so that they aren’t a burden on the *compas*. They are coming to lend their support, to offer their condolences to the family of the deceased and the *compas* here, not to be attended to. Meaning, it’s not a party.”

Oh, and also tell them that the bases of support will be holding an homage to *compa* Galeano in all of the *caracoles* on May 24. And that it would be good for them to do something that day in the places where they live also, according to their own schedules and styles.

And another thing. Tell them we are especially inviting the *compañeras* and *compañeros* from the independent media or alternative media or autonomous media or whatever, the media that isn’t paid off, that is part of the Sixth, the ones that are our *compañeras* and *compañeros* and have the responsibility of “listener” commission in their lands. Tell them that maybe —say it like that, “maybe”— the General Command of the EZLN will do a press conference with the independent media or whatever you call them, the ones who are part of the Sixth. I say “maybe” because it could be that it won’t happen because of work we have to do and we don’t want to end up on bad terms. Also, the paid media aren’t invited; we won’t receive them.

“Shall I send them a photo of the deceased?”

“Yes, but the one of him alive, not of the cadaver. Because we remember our *compañeros* for how they lived the struggle.”

“Okay. What else?”

“Just that we are here—which I think they already know— here in *la realidad*.”

.\_.

*Vale*. To health and listening.

From the mountains of the Mexican Southeast.

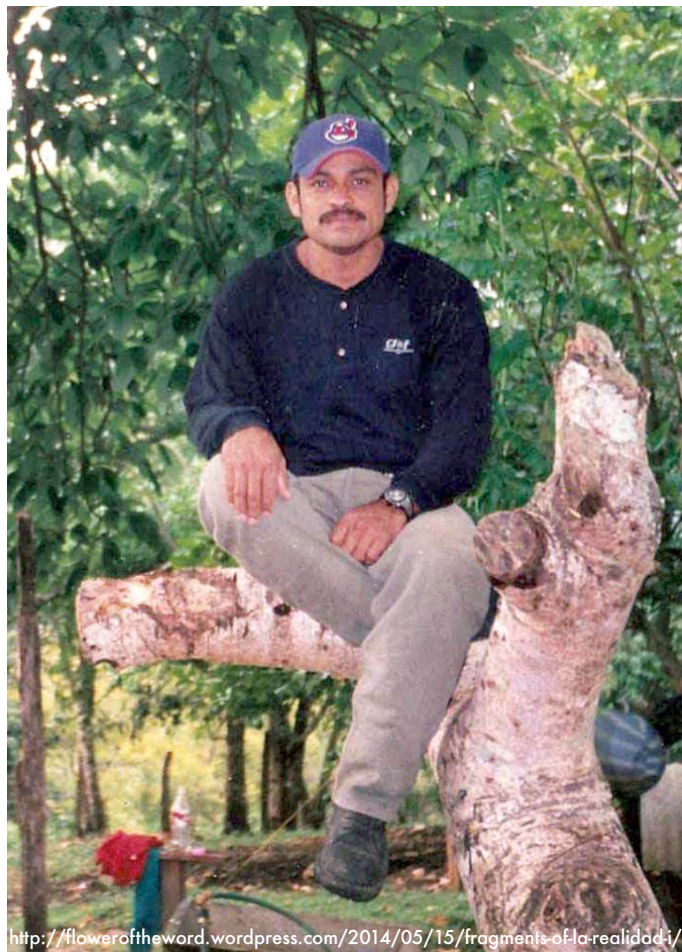
Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos.

Mexico, May 2014. In the twentieth year of the war against oblivion.

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#### Notes

2. Accessed from Enlace Zapatista <<http://enlacezapatista.ezln.org.mx/2014/05/15/fragments-of-la-realidad-i/>> on May 20, 2014.
3. *Calor*, or heat, is a masculine noun in Spanish. Here the author uses “*la calor*,” in the feminine.
4. See footnote 1.



<http://floweroftheword.wordpress.com/2014/05/15/fragments-of-la-realidad-i/>

# PAIN AND RAGE<sup>5</sup>

## Zapatista Army for National Liberation Mexico

May 8, 2014

To the *Compañeras* and *Compañeros* of the Sixth:

*Compas*:

To tell you the truth, the communiqué was all ready. It was succinct, clear, precise, how communiqués should be. But... well... maybe later.

For now the meeting with the *compañeros* and *compañeras* bases of support of the community of La Realidad is about to begin.

We listen.

We have known the tone and the emotion with which they speak for a long time: pain and rage.

So it occurs to me that a communiqué will not adequately reflect this.

Or at least not fully.

True, maybe a letter won't do so either, but at least the words that follow are an attempt, even if they are only a pale reflection.

Because...

It was pain and rage that made us challenge everything and everyone twenty years ago.

And it is pain and rage that now again makes us lace up our boots, put on our uniforms, strap on our guns, and cover our faces.

And that leads me to don the old and tattered hat, the one with three red five-pointed stars.

It is pain and rage that has brought us to La Realidad.

A few moments ago, after we explained that we had arrived here in response to the petition of support made by the *Junta*

*de Buen Gobierno*, a base of support and a teacher in the course "Freedom According to the Zapatista," told us more or less the following:

"*Compañero* Subcomandante, we want to be clear, if we were not Zapatistas we would already have taken revenge and it would have led to a massacre, because we are filled with rage about what they did to our *compañero* Galeano. But we are Zapatistas and we don't seek revenge, but rather justice. So we have waited to see what you all will say and that is what we will do."

As I listened to him, I felt both envy and sorrow.

I felt envy toward those who have had the privilege of having women and men like Galeano and like this *compa* who was speaking as teachers. Thousands of men and women from across the world have had this good fortune.

And I felt sorry for those who no longer have the possibility of having Galeano as their teacher.

The *compañero* Subcomandante Moisés has had to make a very difficult decision. His decision cannot be appealed, and if someone were to ask my opinion (which no one has done), his decision is unobjectionable. He has decided to indefinitely suspend the meeting and exchange with the indigenous peoples and organizations of the National Indigenous Congress. And he has also decided to suspend the homage that we had prepared for our absent *compañero* Don Luis Villoro Toranzo, as well as to suspend our participation in the seminar "Ethics in the face of Dispossession," that was being organized by artists and intellectuals in Mexico and the world.

What led him to this decision? Well, the preliminary results of our investigation, as well as information that we have received, leave no doubts regarding the following:

1. This was a planned, premeditated attack, militarily organized, and put into action with premeditated malice and advantage. And it is an act of aggression inscribed in a climate created and cultivated from above.

2. The leaderships of the paramilitary group called CIOAC-Histórica, the Green Ecological Party (the name under which the PRI governs in Chiapas), the National Action Party [PAN]

and the Revolutionary Institutional Party [PRI], are all implicated in directing this attack.

3. We know that at least the government of the State of Chiapas is implicated. We have not yet determined to what extent the federal government was also involved.

One woman from these anti-Zapatista organizations has come to tell us that this attack was planned and that in fact the goal was specifically to “fuck over” Galeano.

In sum: this was not some intra-community problem, where two groups confront each other in the heated emotions of the moment. This attack was planned: first they tried to provoke us by destroying our school and health clinic, knowing that our *compañeros* were not armed and that they would humbly defend what they had created through their own efforts; next the attackers took up positions on the path that they knew our *compañeros* would take from the *caracol* to the school; and finally they fired on our *compañeros*.

Our *compañeros* were injured by gunfire in this ambush, but what happened to our *compañero* Galeano is even more extreme. He did not fall in the ambush. He was surrounded by fifteen or twenty paramilitaries (yes, they are paramilitaries; their tactics are those of paramilitaries); our *compa* Galeano challenged the aggressors to hand-to-hand combat, without guns; they would swing at him and he would jump from one place to another avoiding their blows and disarming his opponents.

When these aggressors saw that they could not beat him like that, they shot him in the leg and he fell. Then came the barbarism: they descended upon him, beat him and cut him with a machete. Another shot to the chest brought him to the edge of death, and they kept beating him. When they saw that he was still breathing, one of those cowards shot him in the head.

They shot him three times at point blank range. And all three shots came while he was surrounded and unarmed, but had not given up. His body was then dragged by his assassins for some 80 meters and then tossed aside.

Our *compañero* Galeano was left there alone, his body thrown in the middle of what had been the territory of the *campamentistas*, men and women from all over the world who had answered the call to build a “peace camp” in La Realidad. And it was our *compañeras*, the Zapatista women of La Realidad who defied fear and went to pick up Galeano’s body.

Yes, there is a photo of our *compa* Galeano in this state. The image shows all of his wounds and it feeds our pain and

rage, despite these needing no reinforcement after listening to the stories of what happened. Of course I understand that this photo could offend the sensibilities of the Spanish royalists; reason enough to publish a photo of a scene unashamedly manufactured, with a few injured people, and with reporters, mobilized by the government, of Chiapas, selling the lie that there had been a confrontation. Well, “he who pays, rules.” Because classes do exist my friend. The Spanish monarchy is one thing, and these “fucking” rebellious Indians who tell you off—telling you to beat it to Lopez Obrador’s ranch because a few feet away, they are mourning the body of the still bloody *compa* Galeano—are quite another.

The CIOAC-Histórica, and their rival CIOAC-Independiente, and other “peasant” organizations such as ORCAO, ORUGA, URPA, and the rest, make their living from provoking confrontations. They know that creating problems in the communities where we have a presence pleases the various levels of government and that they will be rewarded with social programs and thick wads of cash for their leaders for the problems that they cause us.

In the words of a government official in the administration of Manuel Velasco: “it is more convenient for us that the Zapatistas be kept busy with artificially created problems than for them to be holding activities that ‘güeros’ from all over the world come take part in. That’s what he said, “güeros.” Yes, it is comical that he should say that, given that he is the servant of a certain “güero.”<sup>6</sup>

Each time the leaders of these “peasant” organizations see their budgets thinning due to their binging, they create a problem and then run to the government of Chiapas who pays them in order to “calm down.”

This “modus vivendi” of these leaders who can’t even tell the difference between “sand” and “gravel,” began with the Priista and nearly forgotten “*croquetas*,”<sup>7</sup> Albores, and was taken up once again with Juan Sabines, follower of Lopez Obrador, and continues today with self-proclaimed Green Ecologist Manuel “*el güero*” Velasco.

Wait just a minute...

Now a *compa* is speaking. Crying. But we all know that these are tears of rage. With a faltering voice he says what we all feel: we don’t want revenge, we want justice.

Another *compa* interrupts: “*Compañero* Subcomandante Insurgente, don’t misunderstand our tears, they are not tears of sadness, they are tears of rebellion.”

And now there is a report about a meeting of the leaders of CIOAC-Histórica. The leaders say, word for word: "with the EZLN we cannot negotiate with money. But once all of those who appear in the newspaper are detained, locked up for four or five years, and the problem has abated, then their release can be negotiated with the government." And another one adds, "or, we can say that we had a death on our side and that now things are even because there was a death on both sides, and the Zapatistas should settle down. We will stage a death or we'll kill one of our own and then the problem will be solved."

In the end, this letter has gotten long and I don't know if you have managed to feel what we feel. In any case, Subcomandante Insurgente Moisés has charged me with letting you know that...

Wait...

Now they are speaking in the Zapatista assembly in La Realidad.

We had left so that they could come to an agreement regarding their response to a question that we had asked them: "The government pursues the *comandancia* of the EZLN. You know this well because you were there during the betrayal of 1995. So, do you want us to be here to see about this problem and to see that justice is done, or is it better for us to go elsewhere? Because all of you may now also suffer direct persecution by the governments and their police and military."

Now I hear a young person, about fifteen years of age. They tell me that he is the son of Galeano. I look and yes, it is a young man, it is a Galeano in the making. He says that we should stay, that they trust us to find justice and to find the people who assassinated his father. And that they are open to anything. The voices in this vein multiply. The *compañeros* speak, the *compañeras* speak, and even the children stop crying; these women were the ones who reconnected the water, despite the threats by the paramilitaries. "They are brave," says a man, a war veteran.

We will stay, this is the agreement.

Subcomandante Insurgente Moisés gives some monetary support to the widow.

The assembly disperses. Although we can see that their step is firm again, that now there is another light in their gaze.

What was I telling you? Ah yes.

Subcomandante Insurgente Moisés has charged me with letting you know that the public activities of May and June have been suspended indefinitely, as have the courses "Freedom According to the Zapatistas." And so you should see about your cancellations and all of that.

Wait...

Now they are saying that up above they are re-invoking the model that they called "the Acteal model": "it was an intracommunity conflict over a sand bank." Hmm... and then the militarization follows, the hysterical voices of the domesticated press, the simulations, the lies, and the persecution. It's no coincidence that the old Chauyffett is in office, now with disciplined students in the government of Chiapas and in the "peasant" organizations.

And we already know what comes next.

But what I want to do is take advantage of these lines to ask you:

For us, pain and rage have brought us here. If you have managed to feel these as well, where has it brought you?

For us, we are here, in reality, where we have always been.

And you?

*Vale.* Health and indignation.

From the mountains of Southeastern Mexico.

Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos.

Mexico, May 2014. In the 20th year of the war against oblivion.

P.S. The investigations are being conducted by Subcomandante Insurgente Moisés. He will be reporting on the results, or, he will do so through me.

Another P.S. If you asked me to summarize our laborious journey in a few words, they would be: our efforts are for peace, their efforts are for war.

## Notes

5. Translator's note: Accessed from Enlace Zapatista <<http://enlacezapatista.ezln.org.mx/2014/05/10/pain-and-rage/>> on May 20, 2014.
6. "güero" is a term that in Mexico is often used to refer, often affectionately, to whites. Manuel Velasco, governor of Chiapas, has made his entire political career with the self-appointed nickname of "el Güero," continuing the long tradition in Chiapas of the despotic rule of a white political class over a majority *mestizo* and indigenous population. The irony here then is an official that serves under this governor (*el Güero*) is complaining about the EZLN bringing "güeros" to the state of Chiapas.
7. "Croquetas," or doggy biscuit, was the nickname assigned by the EZLN to Roberto Albores Guillén, whose bloody tenure as governor of Chiapas lasted from 1998-2000.



## BETWEEN LIGHT AND SHADOW In La Realidad [Reality], Planet Earth<sup>8</sup>

May 2014

*Compañera, compañeroa, compañero:*

Good evening, afternoon, or morning, whichever it may be in your geography, time, and way of being.

Good very early morning.

I would like to ask the *compañeras*, *compañeros* and *compañeroas* of the Sixth who came from other places, especially the *compañeros* from the independent media, for your patience, tolerance, and understanding for what I am about to say, because these will be the final words that I speak in public before I cease to exist.

I am speaking to you and to those who listen to and look at us through you.

Perhaps at the start, or as these words unfold, the sensation will grow in your heart that something is out of place, that something doesn't quite fit, as if you were missing one or several pieces that would help make sense of the puzzle that is about to be revealed to you; as if, indeed, what is missing is still pending.

Maybe later –days, weeks, months, years or decades later– what we are about to say will be understood.

My *compañeras* and *compañeros* at all levels of the EZLN do not worry about me, because this is indeed our way here: to walk and to struggle, always knowing that what is missing is yet to come.

What's more, and without meaning to offend anyone, the intelligence of the Zapatista *compas* is way above average.

In addition, it pleases and fills us with pride that this collective decision will be made known in front of *compañeras*, *compañeros* and *compañeroas*, both of the EZLN and of the Sixth.

And how wonderful that it will be through the free, alternative and independent media that this archipelago of pain, rage, and dignified struggle –what we call "the Sixth"– will hear what I am about to say, wherever they may be.

If anyone else is interested in knowing what happened today, they will have to go to the independent media to find out.

So, here we go. Welcome to the Zapatista reality (La Realidad).

### I. A difficult decision.

When we erupted and interrupted in 1994 with blood and fire, it was not the beginning of war for us as Zapatistas.

The war from above, with its death and destruction, its dispossession and humiliation, its exploitation and the silence it imposed on the defeated, we had been enduring for centuries.

What began for us in 1994 is one of many moments of war by those below against those above, against their world.

This war of resistance is fought day in and day out in the streets of any corner of the five continents, in their countrysides and in their mountains.

It was and is ours, as it is of many from below, a war for humanity and against neoliberalism.

Against death, we demand life. Against silence, we demand the word and respect.

Against oblivion, memory. Against humiliation and contempt, dignity.

Against oppression, rebellion.

Against slavery, freedom.

Against imposition, democracy.

Against crime, justice.

Who with the least bit of humanity in their veins would or could question these demands?

And many listened to us then.

The war we waged gave us the privilege of arriving to attentive and generous ears and hearts in geographies near and far.

Even lacking what was then lacking, and as of yet missing what is yet to come, we managed to attain the other's gaze, their ear, and their heart.

It was then that we saw the need to respond to a critical question.

“What next?”

In the gloomy calculations on the eve of war there hadn't been any possibility of posing any question whatsoever. And so this question brought us to others:

Should we prepare those who come after us for the path of death?

Should we develop more and better soldiers?

Invest our efforts in improving our battered war machine?

Simulate dialogues and a disposition toward peace while preparing new attacks?

Kill or die as the only destiny?

Or should we reconstruct the path of life, that which those from above had broken and continue breaking?

The path that belongs not only to Indigenous people, but to workers, students, teachers, youth, peasants, along with all of those differences that are celebrated above and persecuted and punished below.

Should we have adorned with our blood the path that others have charted to Power, or should we have turned our heart and gaze toward who we are, toward those who are what we are –that is, the Indigenous people, guardians of the earth and of memory?

Nobody listened then, but in the first babblings that were our words we made note that our dilemma was not between negotiating and fighting, but between dying and living.

Whoever noticed then that this early dilemma was not an individual one would have perhaps better understood what has occurred in the Zapatista reality over the last twenty years.

But I was telling you that we came across this question and this dilemma.

And we chose.

And rather than dedicating ourselves to training *guerrillas*, soldiers, and squadrons, we developed education and health promoters, who went about building the foundations of autonomy that today amaze the world.

Instead of constructing barracks, improving our weapons, and building walls and trenches, we built schools, hospitals and health centers; improving our living conditions.

Instead of fighting for a place in the Parthenon of individualized deaths of those from below, we chose to construct life.

All this in the midst of a war that was no less lethal because it was silent.

Because, *compas*, it is one thing to yell, “You Are Not Alone,” and another to face an armored column of federal troops with only one’s body, which is what happened in the Highlands Zone of Chiapas. And then if you are lucky someone finds out about it, and with a little more luck the person who finds out is outraged, and then with another bit of luck the outraged person does something about it.

In the meantime, the tanks are held back by Zapatista women, and in the absence of ammunition, insults and stones would force the serpent of steel to retreat.

And in the Northern Zone of Chiapas, to endure the birth and development of the *guardias blancas*<sup>9</sup> who would then be recycled as paramilitaries; and in the Tzotz Choj Zone, the continual aggression of peasant organizations who have no sign of being “independent” even in name; and in the Selva Tzeltal zone, the combination of the paramilitaries and *contras*.

It is one thing to say, “We Are All Marcos” or “We Are Not All Marcos,” depending on the situation, and quite another to endure persecution with all of the machinery of war: the invasion of communities, the “combing” of the mountains, the use of trained attack dogs, the whirling blades of armed helicopters destroying the crests of the ceiba trees, the “Wanted: Dead or Alive” that was born in the first days of January 1994 and reached its most hysterical level in 1995 and in the remaining years of the administration of that now-employee of a multinational corporation, which this Selva Fronteriza zone suffered as of 1995 and to which must be added the same sequence of aggressions from peasant organizations, the use of paramilitaries, militarization, and harassment.

If there exists a myth today in any of this, it is not the ski mask, but the lie that has been repeated from those days onward, and even taken up by highly educated people, that the war against the Zapatistas lasted only twelve days.

I will not provide a detailed retelling. Someone with a bit of critical spirit and seriousness can reconstruct the history, and add and subtract to reach the bottom line, and then say if

there are and ever were more reporters than police and soldiers; if there was more flattery than threats and insults, if the price advertised was to see the ski mask or to capture him “dead or alive.”

Under these conditions, at times with only our own strength and at other times with the generous and unconditional support of good people across the world, we moved forward in the construction –still incomplete, true, but nevertheless defined– of what we are.

So it isn’t just an expression, a fortunate or unfortunate one depending on whether you see from above or from below, to say, “Here we are, the dead of always, dying again, but this time in order to live.” It is reality.

And almost twenty years later...

On December 21, 2012, when the political and the esoteric coincided, as they have at other times in preaching catastrophes that are meant, as they always are, for those from below, we repeated the sleight of hand of January of ’94 and, without firing a single shot, without arms, with only our silence, we once again humbled the arrogant pride of the cities that are the cradle and hotbed of racism and contempt.

If on January 1, 1994, it was thousands of faceless men and women who attacked and defeated the garrisons that protected the cities, on December 21, 2012, it was tens of thousands who took, without words, those buildings where they celebrated our disappearance.

The mere indisputable fact that the EZLN had not only not been weakened, much less disappeared, but rather had grown quantitatively and qualitatively would have been enough for any moderately intelligent mind to understand that, in these twenty years, something had changed within the EZLN and the communities.

Perhaps more than a few people think that we made the wrong choice, that an army cannot and should not endeavor toward peace.

We made that choice for many reasons, it’s true, but the primary one was and is because this is the way that we could ultimately disappear. Maybe it’s true. Maybe we were wrong in choosing to cultivate life instead of worshipping death.

But we made the choice without listening to those on the outside. Without listening to those who always demand and insist on a fight to the death, as long as others will be the ones to do the dying.

We made the choice while looking and listening inward, as the collective *Votán* that we are.

We chose rebellion, that is to say, life.

That is not to say that we didn't know that the war from above would try and would keep trying to re-assert its domination over us.

We knew and we know that we would have to repeatedly defend what we are and how we are.

We knew and we know that there will continue to be death in order for there to be life.

We knew and we know that in order to live, we die.

## II. A failure?

They say out there that we haven't achieved anything for ourselves.

It never ceases to surprise us that they hold on to this position with such self-assurance.

They think that the sons and daughters of the *comandantes* and *comandantas* should be enjoying trips abroad, studying in private schools, and achieving high posts in business or political realms. That instead of working the land and producing their food with sweat and determination, they should shine in social networks, amuse themselves in clubs and show off in luxury.

Maybe the *subcomandantes* should procreate and pass their jobs, perks, and stages onto their children, as politicians from across the spectrum do.

Maybe we should, like the leaders of the CIOAC-H and other peasant organizations do, receive privileges and payment in the form of projects and monetary resources, keeping the largest part for ourselves while leaving the support bases with only a few crumbs, in exchange for following the criminal orders that come from above.

Well it's true; we haven't achieved any of this for ourselves.

While difficult to believe, twenty years after that "Nothing For Ourselves," it didn't turn out to be a slogan, a good phrase for posters and songs, but rather a reality, the reality.

If being accountable is what marks failure, then unaccountability is the path to success, the road to Power.

But that's not where we want to go.

It doesn't interest us.

Within these parameters, we prefer to fail than to succeed.

## III. The handoff, or change.

In these twenty years, there has been a multiple and complex handoff, or change, within the EZLN.

Some have only noticed the obvious: the generational.

Today, those who were small or had not even been born at the beginning of the uprising are the ones carrying the struggle forward and directing the resistance.

But some of the experts have not considered other changes:

That of class: from the enlightened middle class to the Indigenous peasant.

That of race: from *mestizo* leadership to a purely Indigenous leadership.

And the most important: the change in thinking: from revolutionary vanguardism to "rule by obeying;" from taking Power Above to the creation of power below; from professional politics to everyday politics; from the leaders to the people; from the marginalization of gender to the direct participation of women; from mocking the other to the celebration of difference.

I won't expand more on this because the course "Freedom According to the Zapatistas" was precisely the opportunity to confirm whether in organized territory, the celebrity figure is valued over the community.

Personally, I don't understand why thinking people who affirm that history is made by the people get so frightened in the face of an existing government of the people where "specialists" are nowhere to be seen.

Why does it terrify them so that the people command, that they are the ones who determine their own steps?



Why do they shake their heads with disapproval in the face of “rule by obeying?”

The cult of individualism finds in the cult of vanguardism its most fanatical extreme.

And it is this precisely –that the Indigenous rule, and now with an indigenous person as the spokesperson and chief– that terrifies them, repels them, and finally sends them looking for someone requiring vanguards, bosses, and leaders. Because there is also racism on the left, above all among that left which claims to be revolutionary.

The *ezetaelene* is not of this kind. That’s why not just anybody can be a Zapatista.

#### **IV. A changing and moldable hologram. That which will not be.**

Before the dawn of 1994, I spent ten years in these mountains. I met and personally interacted with some whose death we all died in part. Since then, I know and interact with others that are today here with us.

In many wee hours of the morning I found myself trying to digest the stories that they told me, the worlds that they sketched with their silences, hands, and gazes, their insistence in pointing to something else, something further.

Was it a dream, that world so other, so distant and so foreign?

Sometimes I thought that they had gone ahead of us all, that the words that guided and guide us came from times that didn’t have a calendar, that were lost in imprecise geographies: always with the dignified south omnipresent in all the cardinal points.

Later I learned that they weren’t telling me about an inexact, and therefore, improbable world.

That world was already unfolding.

And you? Did you not see it? Do you not see it?

We have not deceived anyone from below. We have not hidden the fact that we are an army, with its pyramidal structure, its central command and its decisions hailing from above to below. We didn’t deny what we are in order to

ingratiate ourselves with the libertarians or to move with the trends.

But anyone can see now whether ours is an army that supplants or imposes.

And I have already asked *Compañero* Insurgente Moisés’ permission to say this:

Nothing that we’ve done, for better or for worse, would have been possible without an armed military, the Zapatista National Liberation Army. Without it we would not have risen up against the bad government exercising the right to legitimate violence, the violence of below in the face of the violence of above.

We are warriors and as such we know our role and our moment.

In the earliest hours of the morning on the first day of the first month of the year 1994, an army of giants, that is to say, of Indigenous rebels, descended on the cities to shake the world with its step.

Only a few days later, with the blood of our fallen soldiers still fresh on the city streets, we noticed that those from outside did not see us.

Accustomed to looking down on the Indigenous from above, they didn’t lift their gaze to look at us.

Accustomed to seeing us humiliated, their heart did not understand our dignified rebellion.

Their gaze had stopped on the only *mestizo* they saw with a ski mask, that is, they didn’t see.

Our authorities, our commanders, then said to us:

“They can only see those who are as small as they are. Let’s make someone as small as they are, so that they can see him and through him, they can see us.”

And so began a complex maneuver of distraction, a terrible and marvelous magic trick, a malicious move from the Indigenous heart that we are, with Indigenous wisdom challenging one of the bastions of modernity: the media.

And so began the construction of the personage named “Marcos.” I ask that you follow me in this reasoning:

Suppose that there is another way to neutralize a criminal. For example, creating their murder weapon, making them think that it is effective, enjoining them to build, on the basis of this effectiveness, their entire plan, so that at the moment that they prepare to shoot, the “weapon” goes back to being what it always was: an illusion.

The entire system, but above all its media, plays the game of creating celebrities who it later destroys if they don't yield to its designs.

Its power resided (now no longer, as it has been displaced by social media) in deciding what and who existed in the moment when they decided what to name and what to silence.

But really, don't pay much attention to me; as has been evident over these twenty years, I don't know anything about the mass media.

The truth is that this *SupMarcos* went from being a spokesperson to being a distraction.

If the path to war, that is to say, the path to death, had taken us ten years, the path to life required more time and more effort, not to mention more blood.

Because, though you may not believe it, it is easier to die than it is to live.

We needed time to be and to find those who would know how to see us as we are.

We needed time to find those who would see us, not from above or below, but face to face, who would see us with the gaze of a *compañero*.

So then, as I mentioned, the work of constructing this character began.

One day Marcos' eyes were blue, another day they were green, or brown, or hazel, or black –all depending on who did the interview and took the picture. He was the back-up player of professional soccer teams, an employee in department stores, a chauffeur, philosopher, filmmaker, and the etceteras that can be found in the paid media of those calendars and in various geographies. There was a Marcos for every occasion, that is to say, for every interview. And it wasn't easy, believe me, there was no Wikipedia, and if someone came over from Spain we had to investigate if the

*corte inglés* was a typical English-cut suit, a grocery store, or a department store.

If I had to define Marcos the personage, I would say without a doubt that he was a colorful ruse.

We could say, so that you understand me, that Marcos was Non-Free Media (note: this is not the same as being paid media).

In constructing and maintaining this character, we made a few mistakes.

“To err is human,”[1] as they say.

During the first year we exhausted, as they say, the repertoire of all possible “Marcoses.” And so by the beginning of 1995, we were in a tight spot and the communities' work was only in its initial steps.

And so in 1995 we didn't know what to do. But that was when Zedillo, with the PAN at his side, “discovered” Marcos using the same scientific method used for finding remains, that is to say, by way of an esoteric snitching.

The story of the guy from Tampico gave us some breathing room, even though the subsequent fraud committed by Paca de Lozano made us worry that the paid press would also question the “unmasking” of Marcos and then discover that it was just another fraud. Fortunately, it didn't happen like that. And like this one, the media continued swallowing similar pieces from the rumor mill.

Sometime later, that guy from Tampico showed up here in these lands. Together with Subcomandante Insurgente Moisés, we spoke to him. We offered to do a joint press conference so that he could free himself from persecution, since it would then be obvious that he and Marcos weren't the same person. He didn't want to. He came to live here. He left a few times and his face can be seen in the photographs of the funeral wakes of his parents. You can interview him if you want. Now he lives in a community, in...

[There is a pause here as the speaker leans over to ask Subcomandante Insurgente Moisés if it would be okay to mention where, to which the response is a firm “No.”]

Ah, he doesn't want you to know exactly where this man lives. We won't say any more so that if he wants to someday, he can tell the story of what he has lived since February 9, 1995. On our behalf, we just want to thank him for the information that he has given us which we use from time to time to feed the “certitude” that *SupMarcos* is not what he

really is, that is to say, a ruse or a hologram, but rather a university professor from that now painful Tamaulipas.

In the meantime, we continued looking, looking for you, those of you who are here now and those who are not here but are with us.

We launched various initiatives in order to encounter the *other*, the other *compañero*, or the other *compañera*. We tried different initiatives to encounter the gaze and the ear that we need and that we deserve.

In the meantime, our communities continued to move forward, as did the change or hand-off of responsibilities that has been much or little discussed, but which can be confirmed directly, without intermediaries.

In our search of that something else, we failed time and again.

Those who we encountered either wanted to lead us or wanted us to lead them.

There were those who got close to us out of an eagerness to use us, or to gaze backward, be it with anthropological or militant nostalgia.

And so for some we were communists, for others Trotskyists, for others anarchists, for others millenarians, and I'll leave it there so you can add a few more "ists" from your own experience.

That was how it was until the Sixth Declaration of the Lacandón Jungle, the most daring and most Zapatista of all of the initiatives that we have launched up until now. With the Sixth, we have at last encountered those who can see us face to face and greet us and embrace us, and this is how greetings and embraces are done.

With the Sixth, at last, we found you.

At last, someone who understood that we were not looking for shepherds to guide us, nor flocks to lead to the Promised Land. Neither masters nor slaves. Neither leaders nor leaderless masses.

But we still didn't know if you would be able to see and hear what we are and what we are becoming.

Internally, the advance of our peoples has been impressive.

And so the course, "Freedom According to the Zapatistas" came about.

Over the three rounds of the course, we realized that there was already a generation that could look at us face to face, that could listen to us and talk to us without seeking a guide or a leader, without intending to be submissive or become followers.

Marcos, the personage, was no longer necessary.

The new phase of the Zapatista struggle was ready.

So then what happened happened, and many of you, *compañeros* and *compañeras* of the Sixth, know this firsthand.

They may later say that this thing with the personage [of Marcos] was pointless. But an honest look back at those days will show how many people turned to look at us, with pleasure or displeasure, because of the disguises of a colorful ruse.

So you see, the change or handoff of responsibilities is not because of illness or death, nor because of an internal dispute, ouster, or purging.

It comes about logically in accordance with the internal changes that the EZLN has had and is having.

I know this doesn't square with the very square perspectives of those in the various "aboves," but that really doesn't worry us.

And if this ruins the rather poor and lazy explanations of the rumorologists and Zapatologists of Jovel [San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas], then oh well.

I am not nor have I been sick, and I am not nor have I been dead.

Or rather, despite the fact that I have been killed so many times, that I have died so many times, here I am again.

And if we ourselves encouraged these rumors, it was because it suited us to do so.

The last great trick of the hologram was to simulate terminal illness, including of the deaths supposedly suffered.

Indeed, the comment “*if his health permits*” made by Subcomandante Insurgente Moisés in the communiqué announcing the events with the CNI [National Indigenous Congress], was the equivalent of the “if the people ask for me,” or “if the polls favor me,” or “if it is god’s will,” and other clichés that have been the crutch of the political class in recent times.

If you will allow me one piece of advice: you should cultivate a bit of a sense of humor, not only for your own mental and physical health, but because without a sense of humor you’re not going to understand Zapatismo. And those who don’t understand, judge; and those who judge, condemn.

In reality, this has been the simplest part of the character. In order to feed the rumor mill it was only necessary to tell a few particular people: “I’m going to tell you a secret but promise me you won’t tell anyone.”

And of course they told.

The first involuntary collaborators in the rumor about sickness and death have been the “experts in Zapatology” in arrogant Jovel and chaotic Mexico City who presume their closeness to and deep knowledge of Zapatismo. In addition to, of course, the police that earn their salaries as journalists, the journalists that earn their salaries as police, and the journalists who only earn salaries, bad ones, as journalists.

Thank you to all of them. Thank you for your discretion. You did exactly what we thought you would do. The only downside of all this is that I doubt anyone will ever tell any of you a secret again.

It is our conviction and our practice that in order to rebel and to struggle, neither leaders nor bosses nor messiahs nor saviors are necessary. To struggle, one only needs a sense of shame, a bit of dignity, and a lot of organization.

As for the rest, it either serves the collective or it doesn’t.

What this cult of the individual has provoked in the political experts and analysts “above” has been particularly comical. Yesterday they said that the future of the Mexican people depended on the alliance of two people. The day before yesterday they said that Peña Nieto had become independent of Salinas de Gortari, without realizing that, in this schema, if one criticized Peña Nieto, they were effectively putting themselves on Salinas de Gortari’s side, and if one criticized Salinas de Gortari, they were supporting Peña Nieto. Now they say that one has to take sides in the struggle going on “above” over control of telecommunications; in effect, either you’re with Slim or you’re with Azcárraga-Salinas. And even further above, you’re either with Obama or you’re with Putin.

Those who look toward and long to be “above” can continue to seek their leader; they can continue to think that now, for real, the electoral results will be honored; that now, for real, Slim will support the electoral left; that now, for real, the dragons and the battles will appear in *Game of Thrones*; that now, for real, Kirkman will be true to the original comic in the television series *The Walking Dead*; that now, for real, tools made in China aren’t going to break on their first use; that now, for real, soccer is going to be a sport and not a business.

And yes, perhaps in some of these cases they will be right. But one can’t forget that in all of these cases they are mere spectators, that is, passive consumers.

Those who loved and hated SupMarcos now know that they have loved and hated a hologram. Their love and hate have been useless, sterile, hollow and empty.

There will not be, then, museums or metal plaques where I was born and raised. There will not be someone who lives off of having been subcomandante Marcos. No one will inherit his name or his job. There will not be all-expense paid trips abroad to give lectures. There will not be transport to or care in fancy hospitals. There will not be widows or heirs. There will not be funerals, honors, statues, museums, prizes, or anything else that the system does to promote the cult of the individual and devalue the collective.

This figure was created and now its creators, the Zapatistas, are destroying it.

If anyone understands this lesson from our *compañeros* and *compañeras*, they will have understood one of the foundations of Zapatismo.

So, in the last few years, what has happened has happened.

And we saw that now, the outfit, the character, the hologram, was no longer necessary.

Time and time again we planned this, and time and time again we waited for the right moment –the right calendar and geography to show what we really are to those who truly are.

And then Galeano arrived with his death to mark our calendar and geography: “*here, in La Realidad; now; in pain and rage.*”

## V. Pain and Rage. Whispers and Screams.

When we got here to the *caracol* of La Realidad, without anyone telling us to, we began to speak in whispers.

Our pain spoke quietly, our rage in whispers.

It was as if we were trying to avoid scaring Galeano away with these unfamiliar sounds.

As if our voices and step called to him.

“*Wait, compa,*” our silence said.

“*Don’t go,*” our words murmured.

But there are other pains and other rages.

At this very minute, in other corners of Mexico and the world, a man, a woman, an *other*, a little girl, a little boy, an elderly man, an elderly woman, a memory, is beaten cruelly and with impunity, surrounded by the voracious crime that is the system, clubbed, cut, shot, finished off, dragged away among jeers, abandoned, their body then collected and mourned, their life buried.

Just a few names:

Alexis Benhumea, murdered in the State of Mexico.

Francisco Javier Cortés, murdered in the State of Mexico.

Juan Vázquez Guzmán, murdered in Chiapas.

Juan Carlos Gómez Silvano, murdered in Chiapas.

El compa Kuy, murdered in Mexico City.

Carlo Giuliani, murdered in Italy.

Aléxis Grigoropoulos, murdered in Greece.

Wajih Wajdi al-Ramahi, murdered in a Refugee Camp in the West Bank city of Ramallah. At 14 years old, he was shot in the back from an Israeli observation post. There were no marches, protests, or anything else in the streets.

Matías Valentín Catrileo Quezada, mapuche murdered in Chile.

Teodulfo Torres Soriano, compa of the Sixth, disappeared in Mexico City.

Guadalupe Jerónimo and Urbano Macías, comuneros from Cherán, murdered in Michoacan.

Francisco de Asís Manuel, disappeared in Santa María Ostula.

Javier Martínez Robles, disappeared in Santa María Ostula.

Gerardo Vera Orcino, disappeared in Santa María Ostula.

Enrique Domínguez Macías, disappeared in Santa María Ostula.

Martín Santos Luna, disappeared in Santa María Ostula.

Pedro Leyva Domínguez, murdered in Santa María Ostula.

Diego Ramírez Domínguez, murdered in Santa María Ostula.

Trinidad de la Cruz Crisóstomo, murdered in Santa María

Ostula.

Crisóforo Sánchez Reyes, murdered in Santa María Ostula.

Teóduo Santos Girón, disappeared in Santa María Ostula.

Longino Vicente Morales, disappeared in Guerrero.

Víctor Ayala Tapia, disappeared in Guerrero.

Jacinto López Díaz “El Jazi”, murdered in Puebla.

Bernardo Vázquez Sánchez, murdered in Oaxaca.

Jorge Alexis Herrera, murdered in Guerrero.

Gabriel Echeverría, murdered in Guerrero.

Edmundo Reyes Amaya, disappeared in Oaxaca.

Gabriel Alberto Cruz Sánchez, disappeared in Oaxaca.

Juan Francisco Sicilia Ortega, murdered in Morelos.

Ernesto Méndez Salinas, murdered in Morelos.

Alejandro Chao Barona, murdered in Morelos.

Sara Robledo, murdered in Morelos.

Juventina Villa Mojica, murdered in Guerrero.

Reynaldo Santana Villa, murdered in Guerrero.

Catarino Torres Pereda, murdered in Oaxaca.

Bety Cariño, murdered in Oaxaca.

Jyri Jaakkola, murdered in Oaxaca.

Sandra Luz Hernández, murdered in Sinaloa.

Marisela Escobedo Ortíz, murdered in Chihuahua.

Celedonio Monroy Prudencio, disappeared in Jalisco.

Nepomuceno Moreno Nuñez, murdered in Sonora.

The migrants, men and women, forcefully disappeared and probably murdered in every corner of Mexican territory.

The prisoners that they want to kill in “life:” Mumia Abu Jamal, Leonard Peltier, the Mapuche, Mario González and Juan Carlos Flores.

The continuous burial of voices that were lives, silenced by the sound of the earth thrown over them or the bars closing around them.

And the greatest mockery of all is that with every shovelful of dirt thrown by the thug currently on shift, the system is saying: “*You don’t count, you are not worth anything, no one will cry for you, no one will be enraged by your death, no one will follow your step, no one will hold up your life.*”

And with the last shovelful it gives its sentence: “*even if they catch and punish those who killed you, we will always find another, an other, to ambush and on whom to repeat the macabre dance that ended your life.*”

It says, “*The small, stunted justice you will be given, manufactured by the paid media to simulate and obtain a bit of calm in order to stop the chaos coming at them, does not scare me, harm me, or punish me.*”

What do we say to this cadaver who, in whatever corner of the world below, is buried in oblivion?

That only our pain and rage count?

That only our outrage means anything?

That as we murmur our history, we don't hear their cry, their scream?

Injustice has so many names, and provokes so many screams.

But our pain and our rage do not keep us from hearing them.

And our murmurs are not only to lament the unjust fall of our own dead.

They allow us to hear other pains, to make other rages ours, and to continue in the long, complicated, tortuous path of making all of this into a battle cry that is transformed into a freedom struggle.

And to not forget that while someone murmurs, someone else screams.

And only the attentive ear can hear it.

While we are talking and listening right now, someone screams in pain, in rage.

And so it is as if one must learn to direct their gaze; what one hears must find a fertile path.

Because while someone rests, someone else continues the uphill climb.

In order to see this effort, it is enough to lower one's gaze and lift one's heart.

Can you?

Will you be able to?

Small justice looks so much like revenge. Small justice is what distributes impunity; as it punishes one, it absolves others.

What we want, what we fight for, does not end with finding Galeano's murderers and seeing that they receive their punishment (make no mistake this is what will happen).

The patient and obstinate search seeks truth, not the relief of resignation.

True justice has to do with the buried *compañero* Galeano.

Because we ask ourselves not what do we do with his death, but what do we do with his life.

Forgive me if I enter into the swampy terrain of commonplace sayings, but this *compañero* did not deserve to die, not like this.

His tenacity, his daily punctual sacrifice, invisible for anyone other than us, was for life.

And I can assure you that he was an extraordinary being and that, what's more –and this is what amazes– there are thousands of *compañeros* and *compañeras* like him in the indigenous Zapatista communities, with the same determination, the same commitment, the same clarity, and one single destination: freedom.

And, doing macabre calculations: if someone deserves death, it is he who does not exist and has never existed, except in the fleeting interest of the paid media.

As our *compañero*, chief and spokesperson of the EZLN, Subcomandante Insurgente Moisés has already told us, in killing Galeano, or any Zapatista, those above are trying to kill the EZLN.

Not the EZLN as an army, but as the rebellious and stubborn force that builds and raises life where those above desire the wasteland brought by the mining, oil, and tourist industries, the death of the earth and those who work and inhabit it.

He has also said that we have come, as the General Command of the Zapatista National Liberation Army, to exhume Galeano.

We think that it is necessary for one of us to die so that Galeano lives.

To satisfy the impertinence that is death, in place of Galeano we put another name, so that Galeano lives and death takes not a life but just a name –a few letters empty of any meaning, without their own history or life.

That is why we have decided that Marcos ceases to exist today.

He will go hand in hand with Shadow the Warrior and the Little Light so that he doesn't get lost on the way. Don Durito will go with him, Old Antonio also.

The little girls and boys who used to crowd around to hear his stories will not miss him; they are grown up now, they have their own capacity for discernment; they now struggle like him for freedom, democracy, and justice, which is the task of every Zapatista.

It is the cat-dog, and not a swan that will sing his farewell song.

And in the end, those who have understood will know that he who never was here does not leave; that he who never lived does not die.

And death will go away, fooled by an Indigenous man whose *nom de guerre* was Galeano, and those rocks that have been placed on his tomb will once again walk and teach whoever will listen the most basic tenet of Zapatismo: that is, don't sell out, don't give in, don't give up.

Oh death! As if it wasn't obvious that it frees those above of any responsibility beyond the funeral prayer, the bland homage, the sterile statue, the controlling museum.

And for us? Well, for us death commits us to the life it contains.

So here we are, mocking death in reality.

*Compas:*

Given the above, at 2:08 a.m. on May 25, 2014, from the southeast combat front of the EZLN, I hereby declare that he who is known as Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos, self-proclaimed "subcomandante of stainless steel," ceases to exist.

That is how it is.

Through my voice the Zapatista National Liberation Army no longer speaks.

*Vale.* Health and *until never or until forever*; those who have understood will know that this doesn't matter anymore, that it never has.

From the Zapatista reality, Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos.

Mexico, May 24, 2014.

P.S. 1. Game over?

P.S. 2. Check mate?

P.S. 3. *Touché*?

P.S. 4. Go make sense of it, *raza*, and send tobacco.

P.S. 5. Hmm... so this is hell... It's Piporro, Pedro, José Alfredo! What? For being *machista*? Nah, I don't think so, since I've never...

P.S. 6. Great, now that the colorful ruse has ended, I can walk around here naked, right?

P.S.7. Hey, it's really dark here, I need a little light.

(...)

[He lights his pipe and exits stage left. Subcomandante Insurgente Moisés announces that: "another *compañero* is going to say a few words."]

(a voice is heard offstage)

Good early morning *compañeras* and *compañeros*. My name is Galeano, Subcomandante Insurgente Galeano.

Anyone else here named Galeano?

[the crowd cries, "We are all Galeano!"]

Ah, that's why they told me that when I was reborn, it would be as a collective.

And so it should be.

Have a good journey.

Take care of yourselves and take care of us.

From the mountains of the Mexican Southeast,

Subcomandante Insurgente Galeano

Mexico, May 2014.

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Notes

8. Translator's note: Translated by Chiapas Support Committee and accessed from <<http://compamanuel.wordpress.com/2014/05/28/marcos-between-light-and-shadow/>> on May 27, 2014.

9. Translator's note: *guardias blancas* are armed thugs traditionally hired by landowners.

# Comunicado

## Zapatista National Liberation Army

May 27, 2014.

To the *compañeras* and *compañeros* of the Sixth in Mexico and the world:

To the brothers and sisters of the National Indigenous Congress and the Indigenous peoples of our country:

*Compas:*

Greetings from Subcomandante Insurgente Moisés, I want to communicate a few things to you:

First. The Little School. *Compañer@s* of the Sixth in Mexico and the world. We want to let you know that for now, we think that we will continue with the work of the little school, with the first grade for those who haven't attended yet, as well as second grade for those who passed. It's just some who passed the first grade and can go on to the second, not everyone because some did not fully honor their commitment as students. Later we'll let you know the dates for the next first grade course of the Little School. Same for second grade, but that's not for everybody.

Second. Peace Camp. *Compañeras* and *compañeros* of the Sixth in Mexico and the World. We want to let you know that we have received some words and ideas from the FRAY BARTOLOMÉ HUMAN RIGHTS CENTER about putting a Civil Peace Camp in the community of La Realidad, where the crime against our *Compañero* Galeano took place. We have already told Frayba that we welcome this idea, where you could be witnesses, observers, and listeners, given that the situation is not yet resolved. The murderers are still free and their strength and impulse to do whatever they feel like is fueled by alcohol, and some are known to have used drugs as well. The Zapatista *compañeras* and *compañeros* bases of support have to go back to their homes; they can't be at the *caracol* all the time because they have to work to sustain their families. So this civil peace camp is very important. In this regard, we ask you to coordinate with the Fray Bartolomé Human Rights Center. According to what they tell us, the first camp will be installed on Wednesday, June 4, 2014.

Third. The Exchange. We are also going to reschedule the exchange with the brothers and sisters of the National Indigenous Congress, but we will communicate this separately.

Fourth. Reconstruction. As you know, the paramilitaries at the service of the bad governments destroyed the school and clinic that belong to the Zapatista bases of support. So just as we unburied *compa* Galeano, we have to rebuild the school and the clinic. The *compañeras* and *compañeros* support bases in La Realidad have already found a new place to build. So we invite you to contribute construction

materials if you are able so that we can rebuild the school and the clinic.

This is so that the bad governments understand that no matter how much they destroy, we will always build more. That's what happened when Zedillo destroyed the Aguascalientes in Guadalupe Tepeyac, and we built five Aguascalientes for the one that they destroyed.

Finally, I want to say that I have been seeing what the paid media has been saying happened in reality in La Realidad. And I see that what the now defunct Sup Marcos said was right: they neither listened nor understood.

Those above don't understand that we didn't lose anything; on the contrary, we recuperated a *compañero*. And those on the outside don't understand that they in fact did lose something, because now they don't have a window through which to see us, much less a door through which to enter.

They don't hear the sound of pain and rage is growing there where they are. They don't hear that they are now alone.

And they accuse the independent media of being part of the Zapatistas and being paid by the Zapatistas, as if telling the truth of the reality in La Realidad was paid work and not a duty. But we see clearly that this is just their anger because the paid media were left out of reality.

Because as Zapatistas, if we have any money, we build life, we don't destroy truths. Not like the bad governments, that use money to build lies and destroy lives.

From the Mountains of the Mexican Southeast,

Subcomandante Insurgente Moisés.

Mexico, May of 2014.

In the twentieth year of the war against oblivion.





# Assault on headquarters of EZLN Good Government Council of La Realidad

## Centro de Derechos Humanos Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas, AC.

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San Cristóbal de Las Casas, Chiapas

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### Assault on headquarters of EZLN Good Government Council of *La Realidad*

- Members of the Historical-CIOAC, PVEM, PAN attack the EZLN support bases in the *ejido* of La Realidad.
- Murder, injuries, destruction of property and damage to vehicles is the result of the assault.

This Centre for Human Rights documented the murder of José Luis López Solís, and attacks on support bases of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (BAEZLN) acts perpetrated on May 2, 2014 in the suburbs of La Realidad, Municipality of Las Margaritas, by militants of the Green Party of Mexico (PVEM), National Action Party (PAN) and members of the Historical-Independent Center of Agricultural Workers and *Campesinos* (CIOAC-H).

On May 2nd, 2014 a Committee for Dialogue of 15 people, members of the CIOAC-H, came to the Good Governance Council Hacia La esperanza (hereinafter JBG) of *Caracol 1* Mother of *Caracol Mar de Nuestros Sueños* Based in *La Realidad* (hereinafter *Caracol 1*) requesting the "liberation" of Professor Roberto Alfaro Velasco, Special Secretary of CIOAC-H; However the professor literally said that: "At no time have I been retained, I have been in a free state and decided to stay to fix this problem, so we have been meeting and exchanging information continuously," with this information the Committee for dialogue of 15 people decided to continue the meeting until the conflict was resolved and agreements were signed. It is worth noting that on May 4 at 22:00 hrs. the Dialogue Committee for CIOAC-H, withdrew from *Caracol 1*.

The ongoing dialogue meeting had been developing, since May 1 at the headquarters of the JBG, with the consent and presence of representatives from the CIOAC-H, members of the JBG and two people from this Centre for Human Rights, as observers. Since the beginning of the meeting and until the evening of May 02, agreements were being reached to resolve the problems arising from the retention of a vehicle belonging to the JBG.

However, at 18:30, militants of the CIOAC-H, PVEM and PAN that were outside the headquarters of the JBG began to hit the facilities of the School and the autonomous Clinic

which are located approximately 150 meters away. Damages to the previously retained vehicle were also heard. With this situation the BAEZLN decided to stay at the headquarters of *Caracol 1* to avoid confrontation. For their part, the members of the dialogue committee of the CIOAC-H asked for shelter in the *caracol* in order to guarantee their life, safety and personal integrity.

A few minutes later, witnesses, including two from this Centre for Human Rights, heard news warning that approximately 68 BAEZLN were on their way to the headquarters of *Caracol 1* aboard three vehicles that were ambushed and attacked with firearms, machetes, sticks and stones at the entrance of the *ejido* by about 140 inhabitants of the *ejido* of La Realidad, belonging to CIOAC-H and members of the PVEM and PAN. This resulted in BAEZLN injuries and damage to the vehicles in which they traveled, consisting of broken glass, broken light bulbs, dented doors on two vans and a three-ton truck damaged with clubs.

In this situation the Centre for Human Rights documented that BAEZLN, who were in the *Caracol 1* **went to help their peers**, they also were ambushed and attacked with firearms, sticks and stones, resulting in the murder of José Luis López Solís, BAEZLN, who was hit by three .22 mm caliber bullets: one in the right leg, one on the right side of the chest, and one in the back of the skull. He also presented several club blows to the back, part of his head and a machete wound to the mouth.

The murder victim, José Luis, was participating in the dialogue meeting with the leadership of the CIOAC-H. Through his participation he referred to various acts of harassment and threats by the *Ejido* Commissary Javier López Rodríguez; from Municipal Agent Carmelino Rodríguez Jiménez; from the Secretary of *Ejido* Commission Edmundo Lopez Moreno; Jaime Gómez Rodríguez, Eduardo Sántiz Sántiz and Álvaro Sántiz Rodríguez, members of the CIOAC-H.

The current situation in the *Caracol 1* worsened since *ejido* dwellers belonging to La Realidad from PVEM, PAN and CIOAC-H cut the supply of drinking water to *Caracol 1*.

In light of this situation, this Centre for Human Rights condemns the attack on the autonomous project of the EZLN, the murder of José Luis López Solís, the harassment to BAEZLN, the irruption of the dialogue held at the JBG and scald of violence that threatens the life and safety of all people who are in the *Caracol 1* of La Realidad.

It is therefore urgent that the state government of Chiapas conduct a prompt and impartial investigation to ascertain the facts, and penalize the perpetrators and masterminds of the

murder of José Luis Solís López, BAEZLN; Likewise conduct research to clarify the facts and penalize those responsible for the attacks targeting the BAEZLN, that resulted in several people being seriously injured.

In addition to repair the damage to the property of the autonomous project of the EZLN: the destruction of two classrooms and vegetable netting for the Autonomous School; the total destruction of the autonomous clinic; an impounded Nissan double cabin vehicle; three vehicles: a Ford Ranger 2000, one 1985 Chevrolet and a 2002 3 ton truck, and the other damage caused in the attack.

In an **Urgent** manner the supply of drinking water cut by the aggressors should be restored, as this action has deprived the BAEZLN of the *ejido* of La Realidad this basic service.

### Background:

On Thursday, May 1, 2014 in the *ejido* La Realidad, at the headquarters of Caracol 1, from 11:00 am began a process of dialogue between two members of the CIOAC-H Name: Alfredo Cruz, Secretary of transporters; Roberto Alfaro, private secretary; and members of the JBG with the presence of two people from this Center for Human Rights, as observers.

The purpose of the dialogue was to address the confiscation of a Nissan truck, belonging to the JBG, which remained in the *ejido* of La Realidad since March 16<sup>th</sup> this year; the same that was detained by members of the CIOAC-H *ejido* of La Realidad, headed by Javier López Rodríguez, Ejido Commission; Carmelino Rodríguez Jiménez, Municipal Agent; supported by militants of the PVEM and PAN.

At that meeting, the JBG proposed to the commission of the CIOAC-H that as leaders of the organization, they seek peaceful solutions to the problem. The commission agreed that in order for the CIOAC-H to take steps to solve it, it was necessary for a member of the CIOAC-H (Alfredo Cruz), to talk to the official authorities and members of his organization from the *ejido* in La Realidad to order to resolve the issue of the retention of the vehicle. Upon returning, Alfredo reported not having reached any agreement.

Given the complexity of and assuming responsibility for the CIOAC-H, Professor Roberto Alfaro asked Alfredo Cruz to go talk to Luis Hernández, leader of the CIOAC-H, to let them know of the situation that prevailed in the *ejido* La Realidad, urging him to reach agreements with the residents and members of his organization, that would allow a harmonious solution. Therefore, the dialogue continued as a "permanent session" until the problem was solved, two members of this Center for Human Rights was to be present at all times, as observers, and maintaining communication with members of the leadership of the CIOAC-H and the Center for Human Rights, in order to ensure transparency, fairness and safe conditions for the dialogue that was carried out.



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