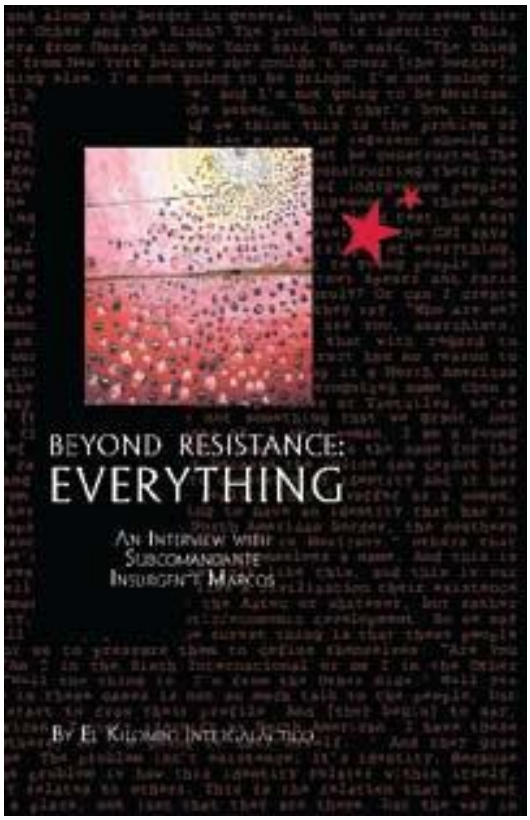
Beyond Resistance: Everything

An Interview with Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos

El Kilombo Intergaláctico



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Contents

FOREWORD

This interview was created and conducted by El Kilombo Intergaláctico. We are a people of color collective made up of students, migrants, and other community members in Durham, North Carolina. Our project is to create a space to strengthen our collective political struggles while simultaneously connecting these struggles with the larger global anti-capitalist movement.

When we designed this interview in our community assembly, we wanted to bring out several thematic layers. We wanted to talk about issues unique to the US: a particular set of race relations and our own perspective on the battle between capital and color; the historic and contemporary predominance of migrant, displaced, and "in-flight" populations and the kind of communities created by a nation of "nationless" people; and the reality of being simultaneously part of the global poor in a capital-rich country and part of the great richness and resistance which exists "below" in the global movement for a different world. We wanted to talk about issues that bridge the North American continent: the real danger and simulated reality of the border, the migrant labor that now supports two economies, and the communities all over the continent that have never recognized nation-state boundaries as legitimate. And finally we wanted to situate our discussion in issues now fully and undeniably global: how to build effective anti-capitalist movements, construct new social relations, and create real alternatives for the organization of society in the context of a globalized capitalist economy.

We want to provide a brief explanation of the perspective and experience that frames our conversation with the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN). El Kilombo came together after the historic anti-war movement which preceded the US invasion of Iraq, and in the midst of a floundering and disoriented US Left and a disenfran-chised population. As students, migrants, and other members of the community we realized that we shared common problems—insecure working conditions, the expropriation of our land and resources, a paralyzing isolation in the maze of attending to bills, health, housing, education, debt, and documentation—as well as common enemies: a corporatized university system complicit with powerful agents of capital and corrupt politician-managers united in a shared goal of patent and profit control over the wealth of knowledge, labor, and life we provide in common.

We started by opening a social center, a space for encounter, where people could come together, not only to find things and services they need, but to meet each other and to talk about creating things they desire. We started English and Spanish language classes, Capoeira classes, computer classes, and homework help for kids. We designed a collectively-taught political seminar for ourselves and the community, and began mapping the problems and resources of our city. The participants in our programs, our neighbors, developed into a collective decision-making body, an assembly, which in turn decided what else was needed. Together we are all working on a health commission to set up free medical consultations, an organic garden to provide free food distribution, and a housing collective to lower costs and address security concerns in our neighborhood.

We were created, as a collective, in the "todo para todos" of the Zapatistas, in the "que se vayan todos" of the piqueteros in Argentina, in the dignity and self-respect of movements in the United States like the Black Panthers and the Young Lords, and in the courage and commitment of all of the quilombos—the indigenous, African, multi- and inter-racial peoples all over the world that built autonomous communities to break the relations of domination.

When the Sixth Declaration of the Lacandón Jungle came out, we sent a representative from our group to accompany the first journey of the Other Campaign, the visit of the Zapatista Sixth Commission to every state of the Mexican Republic. We did this in support of the Other Campaign, but also to create a bridge between our movements and as a learning experience for ourselves. As a member of our assembly said of the Zapatista movement, "They have nothing and they have given us everything." Solidarity is insufficient. The only thing worthy of our dignity and of theirs is a movement here as fierce and formidable and transformative as what the Zapatistas have created there.

The Introduction that follows here, "Zapatismo: A Brief Manual on How to Change the World Today," is a synthesis of our experience of Zapatismo over the last decade and what we believe to be its lessons and insights for a world in the throes of destruction and on the edge of powerful possibilities.

Our interview with Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos was held shortly after his return to Chiapas following the first full journey of the Other Campaign through Mexico. Finally, with the hopes of increasing circulation of the Sixth Declaration of the Lacandón Jungle, we have included it as an appendix, in its entirety.

From "El Hoyo," Durham NC, our hole in the ground, below and to the left,

—El Kilombo Intergaláctico

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INTRODUCTION. ZAPATISMO: A BRIEF MANUAL ON HOW TO CHANGE THE WORLD TODAY

By El Kilombo Intergaláctico

The following lines are the product of intense collective discussions that took place within what is today El Kilombo Intergaláctico during much of 2003 and 2004. These discussions occurred during the advent of the Iraq War and our efforts (though ultimately ineffective) to stop it. During those months it became very clear to us that the Left in the United States was at a crossroads, and much of what we had participated in under the banner of "activism" no longer provided an adequate response to our current conditions.

In our efforts to forge a new path, we found that an old friend—the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (Zapatista Army of National Liberation, EZLN)—was already taking enormous strides to move toward a politics adequate to our time, and that it was thus necessary to attempt an evaluation of Zapatismo that would in turn be adequate to the real 'event' of their appearance. That is, despite the fresh air that the Zapatista uprising had blown into the US political scene since 1994, we began to feel that even the inspiration of Zapatismo had been quickly contained through its insertion into a well-worn and untenable narrative: Zapatismo was another of many faceless and indifferent "third world" movements that demanded and deserved solidarity from leftists in the "global north." From our position as an organization composed in large part by people of color in the United States, we viewed this focus on "solidarity" as the foreign policy equivalent of "white guilt," quite distinct from any authentic impulse toward, or recognition of, the necessity for radical social change. The notion of "solidarity" that still pervades much of the Left in the U.S. has continually served an intensely conservative political agenda that dresses itself in the radical rhetoric of the latest rebellion in the "darker nations" while carefully maintaining political action at a distance from our own daily lives, thus producing a political subject (the solidarity provider) that more closely resembles a spectator or voyeur (to the suffering of others) than a participant or active agent, while simultaneously working to reduce the solidarity recipi-ent to a mere object (of our pity and mismatched socks). At both ends of this relationship, the process of solidarity ensures that subjects and political action never meet; in this way it serves to make change an *a priori* impossibility. In other words, this practice of solidarity urges us to participate in its perverse logic by accepting the narrative that power tells us about itself: that those who could make change don't need it and that those who need change can't make it. To the extent that human solidarity has a future, this logic and practice do not!

For us, Zapatismo was (and continues to be) unique exactly because it has provided us with the elements to shatter this tired schema. It has inspired in us the ability, and impressed upon us the necessity, of always viewing ourselves as dignified political subjects with desires, needs, and projects worthy of struggle. With the publication of *The Sixth Declaration of the Lacandón Jungle*

in June of 2005, the Zapatistas have made it even clearer that we must move beyond appeals to this stunted form of solidarity, and they present us with a far more difficult challenge: that wherever in the world we may be located, we must become "companer@s" (neither followers nor leaders) in a truly global struggle to change the world. As a direct response to this call, this analysis is our attempt to read Zapatismo as providing us with the rough draft of a manual for contemporary political action that eventually must be written by us all.

1. Why Fight

On January 1st of 1994, the very day that the North American Free Trade Agreement was to go into effect, the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN), an army composed in its grand majority by members of Chiapas' six largest indigenous groups, declared war on the Mexican army and its then commander-in-chief, Carlos Salinas de Gortari, who, according to the EZLN, was waging an undeclared genocidal war against the peoples of Mexico. In response, the EZLN proposed that fellow Mexicans join them in a struggle for land, housing, food, health, education, work, independence, democracy, justice and peace.[1] During a twelve day military offensive, Zapatista soldiers, many of them armed only with old rifles and wooden sticks, occupied seven municipalities in the state of Chiapas (Altamirano, Las Margaritas, San Cristóbal, Ocosingo, Chanal, Huixtan, and Oxchuc). Since these first days, there have been hundreds of pages written claiming that the EZLN is a movement for the rights of indigenous Mexicans, for the recuperation of rural lands, for constitutional reform, and for the end of NAFTA. We would like to insist that despite the fact that all of these claims are absolutely true, none of them are sufficient to understand the appearance and resonance of the EZLN. According to Subcomandante Marcos (the delegated spokesperson of the EZLN),[2] the Zapatistas wanted something far more naïve and straightforward than the innumerable goals that were attributed to them. In his own words, they wanted to "change the world."[3] We believe that this must be our first and primary premise if we are to understand Zapatismo: that the EZLN is a movement to change the world, and that those who have been attracted to them, including those who might read these pages, sympathize with the EZLN because they too believe, like the Zapatistas, that, "another world" is both possible and necessary.[4]

[1] Zapatista Army of National Liberation, First Declaration of the Lacandón Jungle. Published January 1, 1994. www.ezln.org.

[2] With regards to the figure of Marcos, we feel it is important to make two points very clear: 1) Those who think that Marcos could have thought up the concepts of Zapatismo on his own and without the communities that have delegated to him his task and role have not understood the nature and magnitude of what is happening in those communities; 2) Those who think that the Zapatista communities should simply do away with the figure of Marcos have either not read his texts or not observed the sympathy and support that these have created for the Zapatista communities throughout the world. In other words, Marcos is the delegated spokesperson for a capable and extremely well-organized political movement and, exactly because we respect the delegatory capacity and decision of those communities, we see no reason to treat him otherwise.

[3] Zapatista Army of National Liberation, "What Makes Us Different Is Our Political Proposal." August 30, 1996. flag.blackened.net.

[4] Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos, "No To The War in the Balkans." June, 1999. flag.blackened.net.

2. A Truly Total War

In presenting this premise, the first and most obvious question that arises is, what is wrong with the world today that the EZLN and others might want to change it? According to the Zapatistas, our current global condition is characterized by the fact that today humanity suffers the consequences of the world's first truly TOTAL war, what the EZLN has aptly named the Fourth World War.[5] The nature of this war is best understood by contrasting those World Wars that have preceded it. Taking for granted that the nature of the First and Second World Wars are well known (i.e. Allied Powers vs. Central Powers and Allied Powers vs. Axis Powers), we will turn to the immediately preceding world war—though it is rarely understood as such—the Third World War. The Third World War (or the Cold War) was characterized by the fact that nation-states faced down other nation-states (most typically the United States and its allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and its allies in the Warsaw Pact) for the control of discrete territories around the globe (most specifically Central Africa, Southeast Asia, and Central America). At the height of this conflict, the guerrilla style tactics adopted by each side made it appear, as General Nguyen Van Giap noted, that "the front today is everywhere."[6] And yet, most anyone would agree that like the previous World Wars, the Third World War ended with the conquest of specific territories and the ultimate defeat of an externally identifiable enemy (the U.S.S.R.).

In contrast, what the EZLN has identified as the Fourth World War is a war between what the EZLN has termed the "Empire of Money"[7] and humanity. The main objectives of this war are: first, the capture of territory and labor for the expansion and construction of new markets; second, the extortion of profit; and third, the globalization of exploitation. Significantly then, for the first time, we are in the midst of a World War that is not fought between nations or even between a nation and an externally identifiable enemy. It is instead a war for the imposition of a logic and a practice, the logic and practice of capital, and therefore everything that is human and opposes capital is the enemy; we are all at all times potentially *the* enemy,[8] thus requiring an omniscient and omnipotent social policing. As the EZLN explains, this qualifies the Fourth World War as the first truly TOTAL war because, unlike even the Third World War, this is not a war on all fronts; it is the first world war with NO front.[9]

[5] This section of our text is an elaboration and synthesis of the concept of "The Fourth World War," as found in Zapatista literature. *See* "The Fourth World War," an excerpt from a talk given by Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos to the International Civil Commission of Human Rights Observation in La Realidad, Chiapas on November 20, 1999, published in Spanish in La Jornada, October 23, 2001. www.elkilombo.org. *See* also by Subcomandante Marcos: "Seven Loose Pieces of the Global Jigsaw Puzzle," June, 1997. www.elkilombo.org; "Between the Satellite and the Microscope, the Other's Gaze," November 20, 1999. flag.blackened.net; "The World: Seven Thoughts in May," Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos, May, 2003. www.elkilombo.org; and "Closing Remarks at the First Intercontinental Encounter for Humanity and Against Neoliberalism," flag.blackened.net.

[6] *See* Vo Nguyen Giap, *People's War, People's Army.* Frederick A. Praeger, Inc. New York, NY, 1962.

[7] For Marcos' use of this term, *see* "The World: Seven Thoughts in May." Subcomandante Marcos. May, 2003. www.elkilombo.org.

[8] As the EZLN has stated, "The 'other' is no longer somewhere else, but everywhere and all the time." "The World: Seven Thoughts in May." Subcomandante Marcos. May, 2003. www.elkilombo.org.

[9] It is important to note the slight but significant difference between General Giap's insight and that of Subcomandante Marcos'. Although Giap highlights the geographic blurring of front lines (i.e. the physical dispersal of friends and enemies), he is always insistent that friends and enemies face off as two originally and irredeemably distinct entities. In contrast, the notion of a war with NO front directly challenges the notion that warfare is limited to physically external entities identifiable as friends and enemies.

A. The Two Faces of War

The war with no front has two faces. The first is destruction. Any coherent logic and practice that allows for the organization of life outside of capital, anything that allows us to identify ourselves as existing independent of capital, must be destroyed or, what may be the same thing, reduced to the quantifiable exchangeability of the world market. Cultures, languages, histories, memories, ideas, and dreams all must undergo this process. In this regard, struggles for control over the production and subordination of racialized and gendered identities becomes a central battlefield. All the colors of the people of the earth face off with the insipid color of money. For the capitalist market, the ultimate goal is to make the entire world a desert of indifference populated only by equally indifferent and exchangeable consumers and producers. As a direct consequence, the "Empire of Money" has turned much of its attention to destroying the material basis for the existence of the nation-state, as it was through this institution that for the last century humanity was able to, even if only marginally, keep the forces of money at bay.

The second face is reorganization. Once the "Empire of Money" has sufficiently weakened the nation-state, it then reinvigorates this same institution for its own ends through the introduction of schemes intended to benefit the structure of the market itself, specifically the advent of privatization as government policy. This allows for the increasing intervention of the state with the end of minimizing its redistributive or social capacity and using it as a mechanism for the insistent imposition of the market. This imposition is so expansive that literally everything becomes a business opportunity, a site for speculation, or a marketable moment. What was previously a site for community strength (i.e. a mural) is today simply a wall for corporate advertisement; what was previously knowledge passed down to be shared socially is today the site for the latest pharmaceutical patent; what yesterday was free and abundant today is bottled and sold.

Without any social safety net and bombarded with images of an ever-present enemy, the logic of policing extends to that figure previously known as "the citizen" of the former nation-state. This figure is today reconstituted as an atomistic self-policing subject, "a competitor" who enters (i.e. misses) all encounters believing that "the other," that which is not me, exists only to defeat me, or be defeated by me. A total war indeed. Today there is simply no quiet corner to rest and catch one's breath.

B. Consequences

In the eyes of the EZLN, the Fourth World War has had three major society-wide consequences, each played out at varying sites.

First, States: the State in the Empire of Money, as mentioned above, is reorganized. It is now the "downsized" state where any semblance of collective welfare is eliminated and replaced with the logic of individual safety, with the most repressive apparatuses of the State, the police and the Army, unleashed to enforce this logic. This state is in no way smaller in the daily lives of its subjects; rather, it is guaranteed that the power of this institution (collective spend-ing) is directed purely toward new armaments and the increasing presence of the police in daily life.

Second, Armies: the Army in previous eras was assumed to exist for the protection of a national population from foreign invasion. Today, in the structural absence of such a threat, the army is redirected to respond with violence to manage (and yet never solve) a series of never-ending local conflicts (Atenco, Oaxaca, New Orleans) that potentially threaten the overall stabil-

ity of international markets. In other words, as the EZLN points out, these armies can no longer be considered "national" in any meaningful sense; they are instead various precinct divisions of a global police force under the direction of the "Empire of Money."

Third, Politics: the politics of the politicians (i.e. the actions of the legislative, executive, and judiciary branch-es) has been completely eliminated as a site for public deliberation, or for the construction of the previously existing nation-state. The politics of the politicians has been redirected and its new function is that of the implementation and administration of the local influence of transnational corporations. What was previously national politics has been replaced with what the EZLN refers to as "megapolitics"—the readjustment of local policy to global financial interests. Thus the sites that once *actually* mediated among local actors are now additionally charged with the mission of creating the image that such mediation continues to take place. It is best to be careful then and not believe that the politicians and their parties (be they right wing or "progressive") are of *no* use; rather, it is important to note that today their very purpose is the outright simulation of social dialogue (that is, they are of no use TO US!).

C. Insights

If this global situation is in fact a war—and the high level of social devastation as well as the number of dead and imprisoned seem to confirm this—then the parameters of this new war detailed by the EZLN force us to reassess the effectiveness of our customary strategies and tactics so as to determine if they are in fact adequate to our current situation. In this regard, the EZLN's insights obligate us to reevaluate our conceptions of both oppression and politics.

First, the current situation forces us to reconceptualize how inequality functions. For much of the 20th century, progressive social movements had become accustomed to thinking of inequality as measured by exclusions and inclusions. For example, many oppressed minorities spent an immense amount of social energy struggling for their inclusion in national projects, or, similarly, countries on the 'periphery' of the world economy oriented much of their energy toward inclusion in projects for 'international development.' But today, the "Empire of Money" has made this play of insides and outsides increasingly irrelevant as a social indicator of inequality. As if in some perverse fulfill-ment of the desires of previous social movements, today we are all included in the nightmare of the global market. Or, as Subcomandante Marcos' fictional sidekick Durito (a comical beetle) would have it, oppression today—and since at least 1989—is no longer maintained by the famous vertical walls that were meant to keep the masses of citizens inside safe from the innumerable enemies outside (or vice-versa).[10] That wall was torn down forever and has today been rebuilt horizontally across the entire face of the earth. This new wall cares little where in the (geographical) world you might be; it is instead there to keep the billions of exploited below the wall from the small handful of exploiters who built it. In short, this new wall is there to separate the "Empire of Money" from those who would threaten it—that is, from all of us. Given this situation, to demand "inclusion" is to desire to stand above the wall; to demand change is to desire a collective blow for this wall to crumble.

Second, we must reassess the grounds for potential political change. If we are to take the Zapatistas seriously and conclude that the politics of the politicians is a sphere that functions through the simulation of public opinion—through polls and the circulation of sound bites and

[10] "Durito and A Story About Cracks and Graffitis." Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos. April, 2003. www.elkilombo.org.

images—to administer the interests of transnational capital, it would be near suicide to continue to do politics as a competition for influence within that sphere. No matter how well-intentioned or "progressive" a given party or platform may be, the proximity of politicians to the vertical structure and logic of the State today assures only their complete functionality to the larger system of inequalities. In addition, we must remind ourselves that these politicians are not there to simulate for just any power; they are there to simulate social peace for a global power that is today greater than the collective power of any particular state. Thus, any opposition that limits itself to the level of a single state, no matter how powerful, may be futile.

Yet, at the same time that these futilities surface, other strategies and tactics simultaneously emerge within this new situation, strategies that rise to the challenge of the contemporary impasse faced by our previous social visions. Consider for example the tremendous inspiration provided by the following lines written by Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos; what appears at first as poetic license should be read more carefully as the outline of a brilliant strategy for our times:

> "The social ship is adrift, and the problem is not that we lack a captain. It so happens that the rudder itself has been stolen, and it is not going to turn up anywhere. There are those who are devoted to imagining that the rudder still exists and they fight for its possession. There are those who are seeking the rudder, certain that it must have been left somewhere. And there are those who make of an island, not a refuge for self-satisfaction but a ship for finding another island and another and another..."[11]

3. The Methodology of the Inverted Periscope

The Fourth World War continues unabated and the result has been a near total devastation of the earth and the misery of the grand majority of its inhabitants. Given this situation and the sense of despair it brings, it would be easy to lose a sense of purpose, to raise our hands in defeat and utter those words that have been drilled into us for the past thirty years: "there is in fact no alternative." Despite the new contours of the Fourth World War and the sense of social dizziness that it has created, it is important for us to realize that this war shares one fundamental constant with all other wars in the modern era: it has been foisted upon us in order to maintain a division (an inequality) between those who rule and those who are ruled. Since the attempted conquest of the "New World" and the consequent establishment of the modern state-form, we have so internalized this division that it seems nearly impossible to imagine, let alone act on, any social organization without it. It is this very act of radical practice and imagination that the Zapatistas believe is necessary to fight back in the era of total war.

But how might this alternative take shape? In order to begin to address this question, the Zapatistas implore us to relieve ourselves of the positions of "observers" who insist on their own neutrality and distance; this position may be adequate for the *microscope*-wielding academic or the "precision-guided" T.V. audience of the latest bombings over Baghdad, but they are completely insufficient for those who are seeking change. The Zapatistas insist we throw away our

[11] "The World: Seven Thoughts in May." Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos. May, 2003. www.elkilombo.org.

microscopes and our televisions, and instead they demand that we equip our "ships" with an "inverted periscope."[12]

According to what the Zapatistas have stated, one can never ascertain a belief in or vision of the future by looking at a situation from the position of "neutrality" provided for you by the existing relations of power. These methods will only allow you to see what already is, what the balance of the relations of forces are in your field of inquiry. In other words, such methods allow you to see that field only from the perspective of those who rule at any given moment. In contrast, if one learns to harness the power of the periscope not by honing in on what is happening "above" in the halls of the self-important, but by placing it deep below the earth, below even the very bottom of society, one finds that there are struggles and memories of struggles that allow us to identify not "what is" but more importantly "what will be." By harnessing the transformative capacity of social movement, as well as the memories of past struggles that drive it, the Zapatistas are able to identify the future and act on it today. It is a paradoxical temporal insight that was perhaps best summarized by "El Clandestino" himself, Manu Chao, when he proclaimed that, "the future happened a long time ago!"[13]

Given this insight afforded by adopting the methodology of the inverted periscope, we are able to shatter the mirror of power,[14] to show that power does not belong to those who rule. Instead, we see that there are two completely different and opposed forms of power in any society: that which emerges from above and is exercised *over* people (Power with a capital "P"), and that which is born below and is able to act with and *through* people (power with a lower case "p"). One is set on maintaining that which *is* (Power), while the other is premised on transformation (power). These are not only not the same thing; they are (literally) worlds apart. According to the Zapatistas, once we have broken the mirror of Power by identifying an alternative source of social organization, we can then see it for what it is—a purely negative capacity to isolate us and make us believe that we are powerless. But once we have broken that mirror-spell, we can also see that power does not come from above, from those "in Power," and therefore that it is possible to *exercise* power without *taking* it—that is, without simply changing places with those who rule. In this regard, it is important to quote in its entirety the famous Zapatista motto that has been circulated in abbreviated form among movements throughout the world: "What we seek, what we need and want is for all those people without a party or an organization to make agreements about what they don't want and what they do want and organize themselves in order to achieve it (preferably through civil and peaceful means), not to take power, but to exercise it."[15] Only now can we understand the full significance of this statement's challenge.[16]

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[12] *See* "An Inverted Periscope (or 'Memory, a Buried Key')." Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos. February 24, 1998. www.elkilombo.org.

[13] For a similar formulation, see Raul Zibechi, "El Otro Mundo Posible Es El Adentro de Los Movimientos," www.lafogata.org.

[14] For the development of the concept of "the mirror of power," *see* for example "Power as the Mirror and Image." Subcomandante Marcos. June, 1995. flag.blackened.net.

[15] "To the Commanders and Combatants of the Popular Revolutionary Army." Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos. August 29, 1996. flag.blackened.net.

[16] It is important to note that although John Holloway's notion of "changing the world without taking power" closely resembles that of Zapatismo, his emphasis on the "NO!" makes it very difficult to find within his work the coupling that is made so explicit by the EZLN between the negation of a Power "from above" and the affirmation of a power "from below." In fact it seems that, in contradistinction to Holloway's thought, this coupling of negation and

It is important to note how this insight sets the Zapatistas apart from much of the polemics that has dominated the Left, be it in "socialist" or "anarchist" camps, throughout the 20th century. Although each of these camps has within itself notable historical precedents that strongly resemble the insights of Zapatismo (the original Soviets of the Russian revolution and the anarchist collectives of the Spanish Civil War come most immediately to mind), we must be clear that on the level of theoretical frameworks and explicit aims, both of these traditions remain (perhaps despite themselves) entangled in the mirror of Power. That is, both are able to identify power only as that which comes from above (as Power), and define their varying positions accordingly. Socialists have thus most frequently defined their project as the organization of a social force that seeks to "take [P]ower."[17] Anarchism, accepting the very same presupposition, can see itself acting in a purely negative fashion as that which searches to eliminate or disrupt Power—anarchist action as defenestration, throwing Power out the window.[18] Thus, for each, Power is a given and the only organizationally active agent. From this perspective, we can see that despite the fact that Zapatismo contains within itself elements of both of these traditions, it has been able to break with the mirror of Power. It reveals that Power is but one particular arrangement of social force, and that below that arrangement lies a second—that of power which is never a given but which must always be the project of daily construction.

In sum, according to the Zapatistas, through the construction of this second form of power it is possible to overcome the notion (and the practice which sustains it) that society is possible only through conquest, the idea that social organization necessitates the division between rulers and ruled. Through the empowerment of power, it is possible to organize a society of "*mandar obedeciendo*" (rule by obeying),[19] a society that would delegate particular functions while ensuring that those who are commissioned to enact them answer to the direct voice of the social body, and not vice-versa. In other words, our choices now exceed those previously present; we are not faced with the choice of a rule from above (we would call this Sovereignty), or no rule at all (the literal meaning of Anarchy). The Zapatistas force us to face the imminent reality that all can rule—democracy (as in "Democracy, Liberty, and Justice").[20]

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affirmation is a constant within Zapatismo: "against neoliberalism" and "for humanity;" or, "no to bad government" and "yes to good government."

[17] For evidence of the persistence of this thesis, *see* "Changing The World by Taking Power, an Interview with Tariq Ali," by Claudia Jardim and Jonah Gindin at www.venezuelanalysis.com/articles.php?artno=1223. In this exchange Ali, in an explicit refutation of the Zapatistas, claims that the example of Hugo Chavez's Venezuela is proof that social movements must direct their energy to taking the State. In Ali's own words, "in order to change the world you have to take power, and you have to begin to implement change—in small doses if necessary—but you have to do it. Without it nothing will change."

[18] Although the EZLN is well known for its development of a critique of orthodox socialism in the guise of the Ejercito Popular Revolucionario (EPR), it is relevant also to highlight Subcomandante Marcos' response when pushed on the issue of the influence of anarchism and Magonismo on the EZLN: "I have to be honest. When we talk about Magonismo, it also makes me think of the orthodox line, close-minded and stupid. This is the truth. The Magon brothers are only talked about in the context of the labor movement, although we know that they developed many other important projects as well." Interview with Subcomandante Marcos, May 11, 1994. flag.blackened.net.

[19] For an explicit reference to "mandar-obedeciendo" as a crystal that shatters the mirror of power, *see* "Of Trees, Criminals, and Odontology." Subcomandante Marcos. September-November, 1995. flag.blackened.net.

[20] "Democracy, Liberty, and Justice" is a common sign-off used by the EZLN in nearly every one of its communiqués.

4. The Practice of Democracy

When democracy is wrenched from the clenched fist of idealism, and is instead understood as the cultiva-tion of habits and institutions necessary for a society to "*mandar obedeciendo*," a whole new continent of revolutionary praxis opens before us. That is, having been able to identify the autonomous and antagonistic relation that "exercising power" (a conduct of power) has to "taking power" (a conduct of Power), the Zapatistas have been unique in their capacity to move beyond the street protest and rhetorical denunciation that have seemed to dominate much of the rest of the anti-globalization movement in recent years. In fact, it seems that in the same way that the Zapatistas were an inspiration for the recovery of the spirit of resistance that has characterized the movements of the past decade, their vision will continue to be a key inspiration as these same movements struggle with the necessity of moving "beyond resistance."[21]

Below, we would like to outline the most notable and consistent practices that have allowed the Zapatistas to grow and become stronger while many of the movements that were born alongside them in this recent cycle of struggles have come and gone (while the pain and desires that gave rise to many of them remain intact). In enumer-ating a series of distinct Zapatista practices, we in no way intend to imply that any one of these practices is primary over any other, or that any of them in themselves is Zapatista democracy. To the contrary, as many others have noted, democracy is best understood through what physicists and systems theorists have called "reverse causality," where cause and effect form a closed and retroactively nutrient circuit, making the question of a first or primary cause irrelevant. Instead, the practice of democracy in Zapatista territory tends to place its emphasis on the distinctions and discernments that allow for the composition or compilation of a number of habits, institutions, and results. In other words, Zapatista democracy is not any single habit, action, or institution (means), in which case it might be described as a verb; nor is it the *result* of any of these habits, actions, or institutions (ends), in which case it could be considered a noun. Rather, it is an ecology for the coupling of institutions, actions, and their results that allows for a continual feedback loop repeatedly opening and enriching both means and ends.[22] The practice of democracy in Zapatista territory is best understood as a noun-verb, a noun-verb that, despite its recent distance from the eye of the media, is far from exhausted. Among the most compelling components of this practice are:

1) Encounter.

The Zapatistas have used this practice in order to look beyond themselves and build an "archipelago of islands," or a massive network of global resistance. According to the Zapatistas, the first such "encounter" that occurred was within the EZLN itself, and it took place between

[21] This theme of moving beyond resistance has been constant since the EZLN's convocation of the "Other Campaign." For just one example, *see* the interview that follows this "Brief Manual."

[22] For a similar view of democracy in the context of the Aymara uprising in El Alto, Bolivia, *see* Raul Prada, *Largo Octubre: Geneologia de los Movimientos Sociales.* La Paz, Bolivia. Plural Editores, 2004. Although indigenous communities such as the Alteños in Bolivia or the Zapatistas in Southern Mexico have shown a keen understanding of the power of this vision of democracy, it would be a mistake to think that this vision is only accessible on the other side of some non-western epistemological or geographic border. For example, C.L.R. James showed that such a vision was also present in the assemblies of ancient Greece; *see* "Every Cook Can Govern," at www.marxists.org. Michael Hardt has also shown how this very vision of democracy was at play during the American Revolution; *see* his introduction to *The Declaration of Independence*, New York, N.Y. Verso Books, 2007.

the guerrilla members of the Frente de Liberación Nacional (National Liberation Front) and the members of the indigenous communities of Chiapas. As the EZLN tells this history, it was here that the communities forced these guerrilla fighters to listen and dialogue, to, in effect, learn to encounter others even when the deafening noise of weapons and vanguardist ideals would have it otherwise. Thus, encounter is first and foremost an ethic, an ethic of opening oneself to others even, or perhaps especially, at the risk of losing oneself.

Although these lessons were painful for the guerrilla fighters of the EZLN and their community counterparts, they became deeply ingrained within the ethos of the EZLN, and they have led to the organization of encounters as a central practical activity between the EZLN and innumerable others. Even a rather incomplete selection of the encounters proposed and hosted by the Zapatistas in the last 13 years is overwhelming in its diversity and innovation. The First National Democratic Convention was held in August of 1994, the First Continental Encounter in April of 1996, and the First Intercontinental Encounter for Humanity and Against Neoliberalism, also known as the "Intergalactic," in July of 1996, all attended by thousands of people flooding into Zapatista territory to meet not only the Zapatistas, but each other. Any surface investigation of these encounters will show that they were absolutely crucial to the formation of the alterglobalization movement and the subsequent events that were to take place in Seattle, Prague, and Genoa.

Then, in spectacular disregard for the containment the Mexican military claimed to have on Chiapas, the Zapatistas began to come out of their territory to create additional encounters with Mexican society: 1,111 civilian Zapatistas in September 1997 attended the founding of the National Indigenous Congress in Mexico City; 5,000 Zapatistas in March of 1999 hosted a national and international referendum on the EZLN's demands; and in February of 2001, 24 Zapatista commanders took the issue of constitutional rights for indigenous people to Mexico City in "The March of the Color of the Earth." Back in rebel territory, in July 2003, five "Caracoles" were inaugurated as bastions of Zapatista cultural resistance, portals from Zapatista territory to the world, and spaces of encounter for global resistance. With the release of the *Sixth Declaration of the Lacandón Jungle* in 2005, the Zapatistas proposed another series of encounters: the Other Campaign, which included the visit of an EZLN commission to every state of the Mexican Republic in 2006, and another Intergalactic. That Intergalactic is now pending, preceded by a series of "Encounters between Zapatista Peoples and Peoples of the World" in December 2006, July 2007, and December 2007, which has been specified as the first "Encounter Between Zapatista Women and Women of the World." Yet, no matter how many encounters are actualized, the Zapatista ethic of encounter cannot be exhausted. Rather, as the Zapatistas insist on reminding us, any ethic of encounter worthy of the name must necessarily be based on the premise that "what is missing, is yet to come" (*falta lo que falta*).

2) Assemble.

From the beginning of their movement, the Zapatistas' bases of support have organized themselves into local assemblies. These assemblies are collective decision-making bodies that function not only to make consensus a reality but also to ensure the circulation and socialization of information that will make an informed decision possible. Regional groupings of community assemblies make up Zapatista Autonomous Municipalities, which in turn, and after years of silent and steady social construction, correspond to autonomous self-governing bodies called "Good Gov-

ernment Councils," one in each of the five zones of Zapatista territory. The councils are made up of community members from each autonomous municipality who rotate in and out of the council positions, which are delegated by and accountable to the assemblies. The council term lengths vary by region but may range from a few weeks to a few months, with every position subject to immediate revocation by the assemblies if a delegate does not follow the community mandate. This system of assemblies and governing councils demonstrates that the only way to avoid the division of society into the oppressive dichotomy of rulers and ruled is to invent structures where *all* rule; everyone at some point governs, just as everyone after governing, returns to the cornfield or to the kitchen to continue the daily work of the community.[23]

3) Create.

Despite the near total hegemony that advertising and "art for art's sake" has had on the notion of creativity, the Zapatistas remind us that creation is in no way related to the production of objects—be it for aesthetic enjoyment or otherwise. Creation does not (and must not) belong to an isolatable social sphere that stands above the collective, there to be mastered by the genius or the recluse. Rather, in the Zapatista model, creation is born of collective necessity; capitalism has imposed on us a life that is far from fulfilling, and in the face of this situation we have but one choice—to create our lives otherwise. To do so, we do not have to wait to "storm the winter palace" or for a new junta to declare "The Revolution." We must gather the materials at hand today (including our periscopes, our "memories of tomorrow"), and build another world. What seems to come from this project is not "a thing" per se, but a process, a way of relating to all things (including each other). The "art" of Zapatismo has, as its producers and its product, a subjectivity capable of opening and relating to all types of others as subjects in their own right, leaving behind capital and its restriction of all relations to relations between objects.

With this understanding, the Zapatistas have created a series of autonomous institutions which function throughout their territory. There are autonomous primary schools in all five zones, and now autonomous "high schools" in two of them, already with several generations of graduates. All five regions also have basic health clinics that integrate western medicine with traditional healing and focus both on learning new medical technologies and recovering the knowledge, use, and supply, of herb- and plant-based medicines. Some zones have their own ambulances and minor surgery centers, and all are developing specially trained health promoters in women's and reproductive health. The health systems focus on illness prevention as well as social health and nutritional information and practice, so that people not only learn to take care of themselves but begin to build—with the understanding that heath (physical, emotional, and mental) is a collective characteristic—the kind of community well-being they seek. A juridical system based in the Good Government Councils of each zone functions as a body to resolve local problems, investigate crimes and complaints, and hear and decide on disputes. The decisions made in the Councils focus on restorative justice, and their manner of hearing and resolving disputes has been so popular and successful that non-Zapatista communities often bring their cases to the Councils rather than to the municipal or state courts.

[23] In this regard, the parallels between the Zapatista assemblies and "juntas" (Councils of Good Government) and the practices of the Paris Commune of 1871, as described by Karl Marx in *The Civil War in France*, are unmistakable and give a new context for understanding the centrality of this text today.

Other autonomous projects include a variety of cooperative projects on community, municipal, and zone-wide levels. These include collective warehouses for coffee and other crops that allow farmers to evade the "sell-low, buy-high" pattern forced on small and subsistence-level producers; transportation collectives that coordinate movement between municipalities and zones to facilitate trade, meetings, and encounters between the communities in resistance; and women's cooperatives which provide an entire institutional phenomenon in themselves. The women's cooperatives range from chicken coops to garden collectives to artisanship groups to supply stores, all of which are managed collectively. These provide not only new income and possibilities for autonomous sustenance, but also a collective space for women, which has long been scarce due to the incredibly heavy workload required for individual household maintenance. One other noteworthy autonomous activity is the creation of Radio Insurgente, Zapatista radio which transmits in multiple indigenous languages throughout the state, breaking through the mass media monopoly on information and the government tactic of isolation.

4) Rebel.

A confrontation with the Empire of Money is not a goal, nor is it a desire; it is a reality, and it is necessary to find the tools most powerful to defend one's constructive projects against repression. As the Zapatistas quickly realized, traditional armaments were a very poor weapon in this new war. They have silenced their "fire" and have instead insisted that today, "our word is our weapon." Their word(s): Encounter, Assemble, Create. The question remains whether these weapons—the practices of Encounter, Assembly, and Creation—are powerful enough to ensure the protection of the Zapatista communities and the continued empowerment of their vision. We hope that the following pages will provide you with an opportunity to decide for yourself.

INTERVIEW With Subcomandante Marcos

By El Kilombo Intergaláctico

1. THE OTHER CAMPAIGN: A DIAGNOSTIC

After having spent all of 2006 traveling by land to visit the 32 states of the Mexican Republic, the EZLN said that they have found much more pain than what they had expected. Since the Sixth Declaration was written, how have the EZ's ideas changed, in terms of what Mexico is, suffers, and could be?

Well to start with, before writing the Sixth, we did a kind of x-ray or study of the country. Not by reading books, but, like the intellectuals say, through fieldwork. So we sent a group of compañeros and compañeras to various parts of the country to see what the situation was like. After 2001, when the indigenous law was betrayed [by the National Congress], the question left pending was, what now? At that point, after so many years of efforts to establish a conversation with the political class, which failed, we were deciding to change interlocutors, and we had to answer the question, now who? With whom are we going to speak? Which is what I was asking you before we started: "Who am I talking to?" So we sent out these compañeros and compañeras, and we gave them the collective name, "Elias Contreras," in honor of a support-base compañero who died around that time. They brought us this type of radiog-raphy that told us something about the subject of land, something about the subject of young people, and something about women.

In broad strokes, this study coincided with our perception or intuition that the sectors that had worked most closely with us, or which had best understood our word as Zapatistas—indigenous peoples, women, and young people—continued to be near us and continued to maintain this synchrony, not as a result of the virtue of our discourse, but because of their own realities. That is, it is not the eloquence of our word that has earned their ear, bur rather the fact that they are seeing and living things similar to what we are; this is why we are speaking the same language.

We told ourselves we could construct a movement if we could construct a common terrain. The terrain that the EZLN inhabits is a clandestine political-military one, and we would need to construct another level, another terrain of encounter, another space, like you guys say, to meet each other. And this was what the Sixth proposed. The place where we would meet would have to be in their places, on their terrains—no longer just Zapatista initiatives in Zapatista territory, because this would imply once again the hegemony of the EZLN with respect to the tasks and priorities set and the paths and companions taken, which is what had marked the previous 10–12 years. So we said, if we make this common territory and common terrain, it has to be with them, where they are, and that means we will have to come out.

So we did this kind of diagnostic of suffering, of the criminalization of the young people, of this, how do I put it, this *fraud* of gender equality. By this I mean the assumption that the struggle over gender has advanced, because, within the political class or the wealthiest and most

powerful business sector, women have been able to appear more visibly, which hides the fact that intrafamilial rape continues to be a problem, that aggression against women just because they are women continues in the streets, at work, in school, everywhere. And on the subject of indigenous peoples…Yes there had been much attention given to the indigenous *Zapatistas* of Chiapas, and secondarily to the National Indigenous Congress. But there are other indigenous peoples that were not even named, not recognized, as if they did not even exist. These are the things that were discovered, among other things, in the first journey of the first phase [of the Other Campaign].

We had thought, we must construct this terrain of encounter, but we must also ask ourselves, "What for?" Then the basic principles of the Sixth were established, and we decided we were against the political class, against the system, and we were going to identify the common enemy of our pain and the form in which we would find that enemy and fight it. We were given the image of a country with many pains but still marked by what the mass media presents us with: this great divide between the north of the country, which supposedly has a quality of life similar to that of the southern United States, and the Mexican south, which is said to have a quality of life closer to that of Central America. This is why it is presumed that the great movement of people to the Other Side [the United States] came principally from the states of the south and from Central America.

When we began the journey, the first part, it was confirmed that there is in effect a significant acceleration of the loss of lands and thus the expulsion of indigenous peoples and poor farmers to the cities and toward the north-ern border. Schools in general, from kindergarten to postgraduate studies, are undergoing an accelerated process of privatization, which leads to a lowering of the quality of teaching, the quality of education, and the quality of research, above all scientific research, which is converted into a kind of factory for large transnational corporations. This is what they said in one state, Veracruz, where they told us, we didn't realize that scientists are participating in a huge war industry. We were buying the myth that we are doing objective or neutral science, even humanitarian science, and it turns out that it is one part of the knowledge that, in another part—in this case in large research centers paid for by private companies—is being converted into something harmful for humanity.

On the subject of women, with regard to politics from above within the political class, when the struggle of women is institutionalized—that is, when it is accepted that there are rights that must be recognized—here in Mexico appears this great generalization that there can be good laws but they are not implemented. But what we found was that in addition, there are bad laws that are also not implemented. The other thing that we found that was not detected by the first group [Elias Contreras] was the destruction of nature, now no longer because of the inattention or care-lessness of governmental authorities or of the population, but rather as a purposeful policy of destruction, which is the case in all the coastal zones, in the Yucatan Peninsula, in Veracruz, and on the Oaxacan coast. Up to the Federal District [Mexico City], the center of the republic, when we had traveled all of the south and southeast and the Yucatan peninsula, the diagnostic was close, but things were actually worse, because there was an element which had not been detected by the commission we had sent—the sensibilities and feelings of the people.

If you recall, the journey changed as it went along. At the beginning, a lot of people came to present their complaint or request, thinking that the Sixth Commission was a channel for getting their demand to the government. But as the journey advanced, this began to disappear, and little by little the forum of denouncement turned into a forum of expression for forms of

rebellion and resistance. And the people started getting to know each other. And we discovered a hurting country but also a very organized country—organized, but dispersed. Many of these rebellions we had not known of; that is why we make reference to the mass media, because it seems as though if one doesn't appear in the media, one doesn't exist. In this sense, the EZLN existed because it appeared in the media, and since now it doesn't appear, then it must not exist anymore. If that happened to us, what was happening to the rest of the people that had never appeared in the mass media? The Other Campaign means to be the forum where one begins to say, "I am this, I am here."

When Atenco occurred and we stopped in the Federal District, the record so far was more or less balanced [between pain and resistance], with the addition of this surplus, this extra learning, that we had discovered in these organized rebellions, which is not the same as just a rebellion. And the Other Campaign had the opportunity to generate a network between these rebellions. At this point the danger was the hegemonification of what had flourished precisely because of the fact of being so different. At that time, certain tendencies had already arisen within the Other Campaign that tried to create a single party, a single movement, a single organization, which in our view would have meant that these different rebellions would have to retreat or retire. [We saw that] they were not already in a single movement or party for a reason.

When we took off to the North, we left with the prophecy that we were going to go completely unnoticed, that the conditions were completely different. But what we discovered in our path, if you remember, was that the conditions are the same or worse than in the South. We had bet that the North shared with the South historic and cultural roots, and for this reason continued to be Mexico. But in the progress of the journey to the North of the Republic, we discovered that in addition to sharing similar living conditions, the North also shared with the South experiences of organized rebellion, though dispersed.

So after this year's journey, on one hand we have a country in a more serious state of destruction than we had thought, more in a state of ruin, we say, but also much richer in terms of the organization of the people than what we had thought. In fact, in some parts we were already insisting that it was time to design an organizational form that didn't erase the existence of the great plurality that characterized these organized rebellions. Unfortunately, this was understood then as if the Other Campaign is the place for whomever, even if they aren't in agreement with the Other Campaign. We think that there does have to be a basic political definition, but that it has to respect, maintain, cultivate, and make grow its spaces of autonomy and rebellion. So, in broad strokes, we have these two results or these two axes: that of destruction, which is telling us that there is no longer any turning back, that this is the last call, as we say, and that if we take the slow road, little by little, we are not going to have anything left to save or rebuild; and on the other side, that of the rebellions that are clamoring for a national organized space, without losing their identities.

2. A SCRAMBLED GEOGRAPHY

How do the Zapatistas imagine the Mexican Nation in its deterritorialized reality, deterritorialized on one side by a globalized economy and a transnational division of labor, and on the other by indigenous peoples, Mexicans, Chicanos, all of whom were crossed by the border, instead of the other

way around, and now find themselves on both sides of this line? What would a new nation and a new constitution look like in this context of scrambled geography?

What we try to teach people—and to practice—is modesty. We have to recognize that there are realities that we cannot imagine, just like there are worlds that we cannot imagine; and the fact that we can't imagine them does not mean that they aren't possible. This Mexico, so complex in its destruction, could be equally complex in its richness. But we can't imagine it, because when we try to imagine it, we use referents that we already know. That is, if by the new constitution we are imagining a group of intellectuals that get together, write up some good, well-intentioned laws, decree them and have a party and set a date to celebrate, where the children sing the national anthem and salute the flag, well no! We are saying that to make a new constitution is to create this common bridge, a new agreement. You and I are going to come to an agreement on how we are going to relate to each other; and this agreement is going to be different from what we have ever known, because you and I are going to be different from what we have ever been, because of the place we occupy. Neither women nor indigenous peoples nor young people, to speak of the primordial sectors of the Other Campaign, are going to be the same in the new Mexico. Not their demands, not their forms of conceiving of themselves, and not their futures.

Talking to a compañera in the Other Campaign, I said to her, you can imagine, as a woman, a Mexico where the factories are the property of the workers, but you can't imagine one where you can walk in the street dressed however you want without being harassed. You can't imagine this, and here we can help, because we *can* imagine it. If we think another world is going to be possible, the fact that we can't imagine it because of our education, our history, because of where each of us—we as indigenous peoples, others as migrants, others as academics, others as a cultural-artistic group, etc.—directs our gaze, does not mean that it isn't possible to make. It seems impossible to think that one could construct a nation with that border there, with immigration, with the Minutemen, with Bush and all that, no? But the journey of the Other Campaign demonstrated that from one end to the other, organizations, rebellions, and movements are arising for whom this border doesn't exist; that is, it doesn't exist in real terms. In this sense, we can find cultural roots deeper in North Carolina than in Polanco in Mexico City, despite the fact that this line, this border, divides one country from the other.

So we say, how are we going to do this? By guaranteeing that the Other Campaign, or this great movement whatever it will be called, will always have a space for listening, and that this listening will always take into account what it hears. If it's not one group, however good a group it is, the Zapatistas, or a group of really good intellectuals, if instead of this one group deciding what the path will be, we all decide, or we take the word of each and every person and start to construct something, that is where we will go. If you remember when we went through Jalisco, we went through a place where there was a mural, and it was a compañero of the Other who painted the mural. So when he was showing us the mural, I think it was in Ciudad Guzman, I asked him, "So, when you made this mural, did you imagine how it was going to look?"

"Yeah, I imagined it already finished," he said.

"But even so, you started to make it and some things changed and the result is different but similar to what you imagined."

"Yes."

"Could you make a mural," I asked him, "start a great drawing with many colors, without knowing the result?"

"No," he said, "That would take a lot of imagination."

That is the Other Campaign. We are starting to make the outline of something, though we don't know how it will end up. Our honesty and our humility is to recognize that we don't know. The only guarantee that we have that it's going to be better is that we are choosing an ethics. And the ethics we are choosing is the ethics of the people, the people from below; we are choosing to give them their place. It's not about seeing if in the future there are going to be better salaries, or better prices, or whatever. We don't even know if there are going to be salaries. This is a recognition of the limits that we have, that our horizon is this world that we have. And what lies beyond, that is for others to determine.

This is what the Other Campaign is proposing. Those who try to explain us as a movement, an organization, or a political party, take as their referent what is already at hand. We say no. They say a federation of organizations, or a united front of organizations will have to form, some kind of single unit, or a national dialogue, or a popular assembly like in Oaxaca, or a National Democratic Convention like that of Lopez Obrador. No! The surest thing is that it will be none of these things, because each of these has the horizon of a specific problem—and the problem here isn't defined still, other than that it is a system. None of these other movements or organizational forms take seriously that there is another reality in another place that is the same. If the first journey of the Other Campaign removed the barrier that separated the north from the south of Mexico, then the second phase, which we are going to launch starting in the north, we think will erase the [US-Mexico] border, in real terms, that it will be a bridge to the migrants, the Chicanos, to all of the realities that are on the other side. I'm not talking only about people of Mexican origins, also the original peoples of North America, to people of color, to immigrants from other parts of the world, for example from Asia, to the white low-income population, to all those there who are saying, "And us? What about us? Here in the belly of the beast, is solidarity the only thing left for us?" Saying that there, one can't do anything because everything is about television, everything is about drugs, everything is just shit…We think that these people are going to start making their bridges, and that *there* is where we have to give some room to imagination.

If someone from the other side of the border *and* from this side of the border had the imagination to imagine him/herself as a rebel, then think how much more we could imagine a world that has nothing to do with this one—not the relations between men and women, not the relations between generations, not the relations between human beings and things or nature, nor between races, to put it one way, or between nations with different cultural roots. That is why we say that the Other Campaign, and I am referring not just to what was originated by the EZLN but to what has been born in the journey out of the participation of everyone, is going to be a great lesson for the world that one has to know how to read, and to read with humility. That is what we have not found in the intellectuals that have talked about the Other.

3. WHEN THERE IS NO REFERENT, CREATE!

In the United States, we have a concept of "people of color," people that for economic reasons have been forced, or their ancestors have been forced, to live in the United States. But even though these people have been marginalized and discriminated against, they do not consider themselves ex-nationals—they are not simply ex-Mexicans, or ex-Colombians, or ex-Africans—but neither do they consider themselves (US) Americans. That is, while they may have deep memories of their lands, many haven't seen those lands for 400 years; but neither do they identify with a national project in the United States.

In our own personal experiences, we recognize a growing population of de-nationalized people that could never recognize the reconstruction of a nation as their project, because they have never belonged to a nation. Currently, we see in the marginalized communities of the United States and Europe that this subjectivity is growing, and we think that this subjectivity may have an important role to play in the construction of resistance against global capitalism/neoliberalism. In your experiences in the encounters with the Other Side and along the border in general, how have you seen this experience and its possible role in the construction of the Other and the Sixth?

The problem is identity. This, what you are saying, is exactly what an indigenous compañera from Oaxaca in New York said. She said, "The thing is that I'm here now." And what's more, she said it by video from New York because she couldn't cross [the border], so she said, "I'm here now, and here I'm going to be something else. I'm not going to be gringo, I'm not going to be an indigenous Oaxacan because I'm not in Oaxaca though I have my roots there, and I'm not going to be Mexican. I'm going to be something else." But she wasn't comfortable with this, and she asked, "So if that's how it is, that I'm not anything, do I have a place in the Other Campaign or not?" We think this is the problem of identity, when one says, "*Who am I?* " And they skim the yellow pages thinking, let's see, my referent should be here somewhere. Yet it doesn't occur to them that this referent doesn't exist, that it must be constructed. The problem is not if someone is African or North American or Mexican, but rather that one is constructing their own identity and that they define themselves: "I am this!" The basic element of the notion of indigenous peoples determined by the National Indigenous Congress (CNI) in the San Andres Accords, is that indigenous are those who self-proclaim themselves indigenous, who self-identify as indigenous. There's no DNA test, no blood test, no test of cultural roots; to be indigenous it is enough to say so. And that's how we recognize ourselves, the CNI says.

There is no referent in these realities, above all in marginalized sectors, which have been stripped of everything, or have been offered cultural options that don't satisfy them—because this happens a lot to young people, no? Because one says, "If the option of rebellion is what the mass media offers, between Britney Spears and Paris Hilton, then I'll make my own rebellion." Or, "Is this the only way to be rebellious or unruly? Or can I create my own way?" And they start to construct an identity, and they form small collectives, and they say, "Who are we? We are…" whatever they call themselves. [And when someone asks] "But you guys, what are you, anarchists, communists, Zapatistas?" [They answer] "No, we're such and such collective."

We think that with regard to communities and collectives, this is going to arise. The world that we are going to construct has no reason to use former national identities or the construction of a nation as a referent. If some group in a North American city constructs its own identity and says, "I am whatever-they-call-it," maybe not even a recognized name, then a community in Southeast Mexico can do the same thing, to say we're not indigenous Tzeltales or Tzotziles, we're indigenous Zapatistas. We *constructed* that identity. Now [that identity] is not something that we grant, nor something that we belong to. It is a new identity, though there may be elements of, I am a woman, I am a young person, I am indigenous, and I am a soldier, in the case of an insurgenta,[1] for example.

It's the same for the indigenous woman in New York. Her husband hits her and she can't even report it because the police can deport her instead of protecting her. She says, I have this reality

[1] Female soldier, insurgent. The term is *insurgente* in Spanish but the Zapatistas use the feminine "a" ending to specify that there are women soldiers and that they should be named.

and here I am going to construct my identity, and it has to do with the fact that I am indigenous, that I come from Oaxaca, with the reality that I suffer as a woman, that I am undocumented, that I work in a restaurant. And her children are going to have an identity that has to do with all this but is different still. In all of the groups that are on the North American border, the southern border with Mexico, there are some that say, "We're Chicanos," others that say, "We're Mexicans," others that say, "We're not Mexicans or Chicanos or North Americans, we're…" And they give themselves a name. And this is our identity, and these are our cultural forms, and we dress like this and we talk like this, and this is our music and our art. And they begin to construct their own civilization, and just like a civilization their existence doesn't depend on history books with references to the Roman civilization or the Aztec or whatever, but rather that there is a relationship in a community, a self-identity, a cultural, artistic, economic development.

So we say that in this reality that you mention and explain, where you all live and work, the surest thing is that these people create their own identity, and that there's no reason for us to pressure them to define themselves: "Are you Mexican or aren't you?" There remains this problem of, "Am I in the Sixth International or am I in the Other Campaign?" Well, wherever you want to be! And they say, "Well the thing is, I'm from the Other Side." Well yes but no, this doesn't matter. We think what has to be done in these cases is not so much talk to the people, but listen to them. And with questions and everything, they start to draw their profile. And [they begin] to say, "Well, I don't identify as Mexican. I don't identify as African. I don't identify as North American. I have these characteristics of all of them, but I also have these others, so I'm going to call myself…" And they give themselves a name, like the Chicanos gave themselves a name. The problem isn't existence; it's identity. Because they're going to exist whether or not they are named. The problem is how this identity relates within itself, between those that identify as such, and how this identity relates to others. This is the relation that we want to construct, the new world, where these identities have a place, not just that they are there, but the way in which we relate to them.

4. ON ENCOUNTERS AND BRIDGES

Beyond the deterritorialization of the population or the reconstruction of the nation, the Zapatistas have said that now is the moment in which we need concrete forms of transnational organization and resistance. How do you imagine a possible intersection or possible seamlessness between the practical work of the Intergalactic and the entity of a future Mexican nation? For example, in forms of citizenship or labor regulations; one thing we have been thinking about is the free movement of people with a citizenship that applies to the same boundaries as the North Atlantic Free Trade Association. As part of the Other Campaign, what would the EZLN think with respect to these possibilities?

This isn't defined yet. In reality, the majority of people in the Sixth are also in the Other, looking for their place. The moment will arrive when they will say, *this* is my place. But it is also evident that someone who has their historic horizon in Europe will think of different things from someone with their historic horizon in Australia, or Guatemala, or Belize, or Bolivia, Ecuador, or whatever part of the world, Russia. They are going to construct their identity and perspective, their own historic horizon. The new world for a European in the Spanish state means one thing. For the Russian it means another. For a North American it means another. For the indigenous

something else, and it varies like that. But what doesn't exist is what you mentioned before we started, the space to meet each other, to come into contact, to get to know each other. What guarantees us that the reality that the European woman constructs has a relation with that reality lived by a North American who doesn't know what she is, or with that lived by a woman in the mountains of the Mexican Southeast, if there's no space for this? Or if only space is solidarity on the border with charity. That is, I remember that you exist when they're killing you, when you're dying. In what moment are we going to construct a relationship of respect? This is what we are trying to do in the Other. Yes, we ask to be supported, but we can also give support, even within our poverties and limitations. That is why we sent corn and other goods out to others. We're not just here to receive; we are an organization, and we can also give.

In this space, the European from the Spanish state, from the Basque state let's say, to make it an even more conflictive place, is going to contribute her idea with the woman in New York who is a migrant but is not Mexican and is not American even though she has her papers, with the woman who is part of the Good Government Council in a Zapatista community, with the Seri woman on the coast of Sonora. Each person is going to start to say, "For me, my world is this way," and they're going to start constructing it and the other is going to learn. Not just to have the ideas, like Moy (Lieutenant Colonel Moises) explained, who said that when people talk to each other they begin to get ideas, and to understand each other's ideas. Not just this but also to create paths, coming and going, to meet each other.

What is the basic proposition of a dialogue? A common place to speak and listen? No. No, because this is only possible if there is already a stable bridge of communication, a common language. No, the basic proposition of a dialogue is to recognize the existence of the other, to respect them, to say, s/he is other, and I am going to relate to the other, discarding beforehand, not even thinking that s/he has to be like me, or that I will make him/her my way. Like we always say, "The thing is he wants to do it his way," and that's where things get screwed up and cause fights and so on. Rather, it must be, this one is different, this other, as I am different. If the problem is no longer who commands, or who makes everyone else do whatever, then we can go on to something else. Because even when there is similarity in the language, or understanding, there's no common path because there is no respect, even if we're speaking the same language.

So the basic point that the Other Campaign and the Sixth International try to resolve is this: What place will each person have? And each person will decide that for themselves. The most likely, within the Sixth, is that people say, "We are other," and they do an Other thing, and this is what it is about, that everyone goes about generating movement. But in this trajectory they are getting to know each other and in the process creating bridges. And the same thing will happen as what happened in the Other Campaign, where the path of the Sixth Commission was the pretext so that others got to know each other, and began to construct bridges and to relate to each other. These relationships are maintained and will continue whether or not the Other exists. The Other could disappear or fail or change names, but this bridge that the Náhuatl of Jalisco made with the Comca'ac and with the Seris of Sonora, that doesn't have anything to do with us anymore. We were the pretext for them to meet, so they could arrange for our visit. But now they've met each other. They've heard each other: "Things are really messed up here." "Here too, we should get together."

When the Meeting in Defense of Water and Mother Earth took place in Mezcala, in the edge of the Chapala Lagoon in Jalisco near Guadalajara, the Yaquis came. This is a group that generally would very rarely meet with others, not just with mestizos, but also other indigenous groups,

because they are a tribe that has grown from battling other tribes. All of the tribes of the North are warriors, because they were attacked by the Apaches and the Comanches, the Mexicaneros, by everyone. But they began to meet, now not dependent upon what the Other Campaign says or if the Sixth Commission convokes them. The problem is not going to be how the Sixth International relates to what comes out of the Other Campaign, but rather, what is the place that we are going to construct all together? And it probably won't have anything to do with what we see now. If the Other Campaign that you see now—a transnational movement already, because already it is more than a national entity—is different from what you saw in September of 2005 here in this very place in La Garrucha [where the early meetings and plenaries of the Sixth Declaration were held in the fall of 2005], if it changed that much in one year—it changed protagonists, it changed its objective, it changed its voice, it changed its horizon, it changed its pace, it changed its company, now we are all others, we became ourselves, who we are now, along the way—then just think, the same thing could happen in the rest of the world and the rest of the country.

5. THE MOVEMENT OF MOVEMENTS AND THE GENERATION OF '94

There is something that today we call "Generation '94": young people in the majority but also people of all ages, who had their political education in Chiapas or via Zapatista discourse and practice communicated through informational networks. These people, or this network, have made, politically, something like a Zapatista diaspora, which has had a profound and reciprocal effect with other movements and spaces: the alter-global movement, the World Social Forum and the regional forums, for example, in a Left that is young, global, and committed to making an "other politics," in organizing itself without doing the politics of politicians. The impact from our perspective has been deep and strong. What has been the effect in Zapatista territory of these interchanges and of the birth of what could be called a diasporic Zapatismo?

First of all, it may be what is least seen but it is also what is most felt here inside. Almost since the very beginning, the presence of all these groups removed from our struggle the horizon of fundamentalism. An organization that is 99.9999% indigenous has always the temptation of becoming a race movement, especially in the Mexican Southeast, where the mestizo has cultivated hate and resentment in the indigenous for centuries. So in the moment when a fundamentally indigenous organization comes into the light of day, and with great strength—and I'm not referring to the media impact in other countries, but rather how we saw ourselves here, we saw that we are many and we are organized and we can do all of this—its immediate horizon is to become a race movement, that is, a fundamentalism, convert-ing the Zapatista movement into a movement against another race (indigenous against mestizos, or between races, the Tzeltales against the Tzotziles, Tzotziles against… and so on). So this shared interchange, this give and take with what you all call "Generation '94," immediately opens for us a new horizon and takes us out of this fundamentalist risk. Now, we never suggested that! I mean that it is a risk that I for one saw, that the moment was going to arrive when they say, take out the light-skinned ones because they're light-skinned… and of course there are historical arguments which back up [the idea] that from *there* comes the pain.

So the appearance of these people and this form of relating to people of other colors and other cultures opens the world to us without our moving. We become able to see the rest of

the world and other cultures like no one else has been able to, I think, without moving from our communities, because of these people who came from other places. This "talk to me," this "show yourself to me," to us as indigenous, was unknown. We would have said, "Who is going to want to listen to us and who is going to want to look at us?" And it turns out that all over the world there is this generation like you say that wanted to see us and listen to us. So we began to listen and to speak and to show ourselves and to see others. We began to see the rest of the world through a whole bunch of windows that were these young people that came to us all this time. And whether we wanted it to or not, this had a beneficial effect on us, because, without losing our indigenous essence, because we are on our own court, in our territory, we can see everyone else without losing our identity. This opens our horizon and changes us; it makes us understand, in an almost natural pedagogical process, *sui generis*, that the world goes far beyond our noses, however big our noses may be. And that this world is much bigger, richer, better and worthwhile.

So there is the impact that this interchange produces on the outside, which is what you have pointed out in the question. But what it produces inside is, first, it eliminates from us the possibility of fundamentalism. If not, you would have here a war like in the Balkans, first between mestizos, then between groups, between indigenous peoples, between Tzeltales and Tzotziles, later between communities and between valleys, and so on, because that is how history has gone. The survival of the EZLN has to do with the fact that we didn't fall into this, and we still haven't. All this has to do with the fact that these other people came to us, that we were able to see out, and these other worlds made our hearts big. And a big heart is not capable of stinginess. To be stingy, to be petty, to be egotistical, you must have a very small heart, and the Zapatista indigenous communities don't. And this is why, because of this contact, they have been able to construct.

So this generation that comes after the uprising, our new generation, which I talked about one time to say that there is a new generation and it is better than we are… the thing is, this generation already has this richness. It's not a generation that was formed in the mountains, which is where we were trained—isolated, in very difficult living conditions, barely scratching out a survival. But [the new generation] grew up in the resistance itself, in rebellion, but always in contact with others with another horizon. When we were in the mountains, we were on the socialist path. We came out into public light knowing that there was now no referent for this, that these movements were finished, that even armed struggle was done. And these compañeros and compañeras that were children when we rose up in arms, grew up. They became adolescents, teenagers, young people, adults, in this world that is now much bigger, despite the fact that it is still their community.

If before 1994 a woman in this house would say, "I haven't even been to Ocosingo. I've never been away from here," and she would have this temptation to go to Ocosingo, and later to San Cristobal, and then Tuxtla, and then to Mexico City, that would be something else. The generation that is now governing in the autonomous municipalities, which makes up the Good Government Councils and the middle commands of the EZLN, they don't have this problem. They grew up in their communities but they have seen the world through all this we are talking about, through these people. Because it is not the same thing, for example, to see Italy on a *National Geographic* television program as to see Italy through the stories of the people who are struggling in Italy. It's not the same to see the United States of North America through the declarations of Bush, when he manages to say something coherent, which is seldom, as it is to see the people organizing themselves there, people struggling, working, most of all the communications media

which are the ones who come here most. You see the world differently. So you could take the same journey that we have just taken following a tourist guide and you would say no, this doesn't have anything to do with what I saw. The Mexico that we saw has nothing to do with tourist Mexico. Well in the same way, the world that we [Zapatistas] were able to see had nothing to do with the geographic world, or with the world you study in school. It had to do with these people who struggle.

So these are two great achievements, or advantages, or learnings we have been given by this "Generation '94"—to avoid fundamentalisms, and to form together this new generation which is the one that created autonomy here. All that shined just now in the encounter between Zapatista peoples and peoples of the world is a product of that generation, not of us.

6. BEYOND RESISTANCE? EVERYTHING.

This generation, repressed by a capitalism that does not recognize its reality and bored with the tactics and proposals of a left with no relation to its world, has found something that interpolates it in the Geografía Revuelta[2] [Scrambled Geography], the Calen-dario Confundido,[3] [Confused Calendar], the identity of el pinguino[4] [the Penguin], in the Pueblo Girafa[5] [Giraffe People], in an institutional irreverence but a great personal respect…

There is something here that we recognize, if not explicitly then intuitively, as the rejection of the imposition of a universal measure of value, that is, capitalism. This generation has launched a diversity of projects and ideas of self-valorization, in concrete projects but also in terms of a general understanding of what it means to say, "vamos por todo" [we're going for everything], or "para todos todo" [everything for everyone], or, as we've now seen grafittied on walls all over the world, "We Want Everything."

This desire has developed within the Fourth World War, within the globalized market, the nation-state as storefront in the world mall, within the fragmentation of globalization. And these people, this generation, they are everywhere.

Many that have opposed the movement of this political generation, the movement of movements, still insist that there is not a general discontent with the effects and programs of neoliberalism. Any-

[2] A reference to a general theme in Zapatista writings, which speak of a geography that does not follow politically-defined borders anymore (the third world lives in the first and the first in the third), and to a war (the Fourth World War) not between nations but between those above and those below.

[3] A reference to the Zapatista refusal to work on the timelines, deadlines, and lifelines presented by the Powers that be, and an insistence that resistance and revolution create its own calendar, according to the collective desires and doings of those below.

[4] A reference to the crippled chicken that the EZLN commanders could not bring themselves to eat as they were picking up camp and the rest of the animals were destined for the stew pot, and which became a kind of Zapatista mascot. "El pinguino" waddled like a penguin in its effort to walk upright, and insisted on eating and sleeping with the EZLN commanders. It becomes a symbol for the simultaneous awkwardness and dignity of changing oneself and the possibility of walking with unexpected comrades in the struggle. *See* enlacezapatista.ezln.org.mx for the original EZLN communiqué in Spanish on the subject. For English, *see* www.elkilombo.org. At the launch of the Other Campaign on January 1, 2006, Subcomandante Marcos left the jungle on a motorcycle with El Pinguino on the back.

[5] A reference to an EZLN communiqué, "In (self) Defense of the Giraffes," using the giraffe as a symbol of difference, because it has a very "other" form and its beauty comes from showing its "otherness" proudly. The communiqué asserts that defending difference with dignity is a form of rebellion, and by doing this collectively, across differences, one becomes part of a "Giraffe People." *See* the communiqué at www.elkilombo.org.

one speaking sincerely would have to conclude that the Other Campaign in Mexico has made this conclusion impossible. That is, in all the places visited by the Other Campaign, one constant was found: resistance to the devastating consequences of capitalism. For us, one of the undeniable virtues of the Other Campaign has been the task of putting these resistances in circulation, making them visible. However, it is a second idea announced by the EZLN and demonstrated in the Other Campaign that most calls our attention: the idea that resistance alone is not enough to change our situation. Taking into account that the EZ has been very clear that the Other Campaign is not a call for armed struggle, and using the experiences that the Other Campaign has found this past year, what do you imagine beyond resistance? Rebellion? Constituent power? A massive civil insurrection?

It has to do with the parameter in which things are valued. In reality, what is the criteria people are using when they say there isn't a universal sentiment of discontent with regards to neoliberalism? Why? Because the governments are neoliberal governments, because leftist parties do not arise. So these are considered indicators to say that the people are not discontent, that if they were they would demonstrate their discontent. No. We say that the people are discontent, but we don't have paths [for change], or we don't have satisfactory paths. If, in Mexico or the North American Union, to be a rebel is to be part of the Democratic Party, well a lot of people are going to say, "Hmm, no. I think I'll just stay where I am." If in Mexico that means being part of the Revolutionary Democratic Party (PRD), a lot of people are going to say no. [The choice is] you're either a Democrat or a terrorist, or in favor of armed struggle. And in the face of this farce of a dichotomy, many people say, "No, I'm not a Democrat and I'm not for armed struggle or violent action, or even direct action."

So then they say, "Well that means these people are very conservative, conformist, or they are not being affected by neoliberalism." When really what is happening is that we need another way that has nothing to do with the radical Left of armed struggle, or with the reformist left of the electoral realm. We think that this discontent and inconformity exists across the world, and that you have to find it. It doesn't have one channel of expression, or the channels of expression that exist do not satisfy it. And in the case of young people, who are the majority of the world population, this is exactly what is happening. Not even the parameters of fashion, or musical style, or artistic forms can encompass this. That's why new movements, new musical generations arise, because people don't identify with one or the other, so they create another and then another, and this one is co-opted, and so they make another and yet another, and that's how it goes.

So we think that if this path of inconformity isn't constructed, well everyone will go about constructing their own ways of manifesting it, but we will continue to lack the place of encounter. That is why we say, this isn't about constructing a world rebellion. That already exists. It's about constructing the space where this rebellion encounters itself, shows itself, begins to know itself. To those that say there isn't discontent in the American Union, the thing is there *is*, but we can't see it. Or we can't see it because it doesn't show itself. And it doesn't show itself because it has no place to do so.

In this situation, we think that in this "we want everything," there is above all a valorization, how do I put it, not of personal capacity, but of a willingness to take risks. In 1994 in the dialogues in the cathedral, the government representatives told us, "The thing is, you're asking a lot." And we said, "Those who are willing to die for their demands have the right to ask for *everything*." That is when one begins to ask, how much is life worth? What life do I want? And this is what it's about, right? We said resistance is not enough. Resistance may be sufficient to detain the enthusiasm of neoliberal destruction, but we would need a global resistance, an effort of such

force that you have to ask, "If we already have this much strength, plus excess, why am I going to settle for stopping here?" Because this is the problem, right? Because between "something" and "we want everything"… Yes, we want not to die, agreed. But in order not to die, we need a force of such strength that we arrive at the question, the place of not dying is the desire to live like *this*. How? I don't know. However each person determines. And the answer is different from one place to the next.

We think that this movement has to encompass the international network of resistances, but even with this strength of force we must ask, is it only about this, that the army stays away from me, that I'm not harassed as a woman, that I'm not criminalized as a young person, that I'm not attacked as an indigenous person? Or is it about, now with this strength, I can conquer and create my own identity as a woman? Because the problem with a woman saying,

"It's enough if they just leave me alone," is that another woman may say, "That isn't enough! I have other aspirations. And that they're supposed to be praised because they aren't raping or beating me, well no. I want more." It's the same with indigenous people. Young people, too. So when this is put on the table, one begins to ask, "What am I capable of? How far can I go?" Because the politician is always going to tell you, "Up to here, no further," or, "Okay, there, that's sufficient," or, "This is progress, and if you don't accept this, you're going to lose everything."

Because one thing is that it's not armed struggle, and another thing is that it's not non-violent. One example is the APPO. In Oaxaca, there was not armed struggle, but there was violence, on both sides. And this popular violence, I don't condemn it. On the contrary, I salute how they confronted the Federal Preventative Police and defeated them numerous times. And many have advised and are advising them [the Oaxacan resistance], and this is the dispute over the movement in Oaxaca, that they should stop where they're at, that they have made significant progress, they achieved some things, and that now they should try to get a few prisoners out and leave it at that. But the kids, the young people, men and women, the ones who maintained the movement, they are saying, "Why?" And here lies the issue. "Why am I going to settle for Ulises Ruiz stepping down and someone else the same steps in? Why don't I ask at this point, who do we want to be the government? Or why don't I ask if we're going to have a government?" Some-body said, I think it was a drawing that said, "They are trying to obligate us to govern. We won't fall into the trap!" That is, they want us to be like them.

And when this is what is put on the table, imagine this at the national and global level: why are we going to settle with saying, well okay, good enough that the capitalists just don't destroy nature completely. We're going to make laws so they can't contaminate the rivers, destroy the beaches, the air, and all of this. But, why do we have to settle for there being capitalists at all? That is the next question. We could demand that they give us good salaries, or that prices not be so high, or that they don't manufacture such trash. But why does there have to be someone that does this? Why don't we do it ourselves? Even the most radical leftist sectors in Mexico, the non-electoral Left, said, "the truth is we hadn't even asked these questions. We were talking about the taking of power, the dictatorship of the proletariat, but we never put on the table that everything just belongs to the people."

This is what we are doing here in Zapatista territory. We didn't rise up in arms to say, "Okay, let's ask for better salaries from the plantation owners." No! We said, "We are not going to die anymore and we are going to run off the plantation owners and keep the land ourselves." Are we going to ask that they give us a good municipal president? No! The municipal president has to go and we're going to make our own government. It is this force, not personal strength, not

"I'm strong because I do exercise," but I am strong because I am willing to offer this, risk this, in the struggle. We think that in the Other Campaign, the Zapatistas are strong because we risked everything. And we challenge everyone else: and you, what will you risk? And we'll see the size of the risks, and thus the size of the demands, and the [size of the] fear, of each person.

So this is what we say: if it is great movements that have recently turned over governments and opened the possibility for change in a place, even if that [change] hasn't been concretized, those movements in the last few decades have not been armed struggles. But neither have they been non-violent. In the cases of Bolivia, Ecuador, Argentina, these weren't armed struggles but neither were they struggles of "flower power." There were confrontations, there were clashes, fighting that resulted in injured and dead on both sides. And we think this is what must be done. But this is the problem, the problem of, for what? There are some that say, "In order to create a party," and others that say, "No, in order to change society." This is the great difference. And this is what those who are lobbying for the Other Campaign to join forces with Lopez Obrador's movement don't understand. It's not the same thing! They want to change presidents, to switch governments. We don't want the government. We want another country, another world.

7. CONSTRUCTING COMMUNITY IN LIBERATED TERRITORY

To give us a framework of the "we" that you already are, can you explain the organization of the MAREZ [Rebel Zapatista Autonomous Municipalities] and their relationship to the military structure of the EZLN? How many autonomous municipalities exist? How many people live in these municipalities? What are the basic functions of these municipalities?

All of this is born with the First Declaration of the Lacandón Jungle, which says that the EZLN will advance and liberate the territories over which it advances from the oppressor government and will implant civilian, just, free, democratically chosen governments. This doesn't happen. But in December of 1994, almost a year after the uprising, the autonomous municipalities were created, though still very dependent on the military structure, because at that time, we [the EZLN] were stationary there. We were in the territory where we formed, but now there was going to be a civilian government, not from the official government, but of civilians from the communities.

But as an organization very tied to the political-military apparatus, the political-military apparatus was carrying out governmental functions, the organizational part, but it continued to be a hierarchical structure. It's not that the military officers of the insurgents give orders, but the committees do, which are the political-organizational commands. So during this time, the committee that should organize the people and represent the organization to the outside is carrying out governmental functions. We began to see justice issues, agrarian distribution problems for example, but all of this kind of stayed as "we'll see," because we didn't yet know how the dialogues were going to turn out. When it became clear that these weren't going anywhere, or at least that it was going to take a long time, the autonomous governments were installed. But we also began to see an unbalanced development in the regions. Where the commanding officers were closest to operations in a region, the development was slower, and where the officers were further, the development was faster. Because the distance of the military command obligated them, like Moy explained, to resolve their problems. I mean, between "let's go ask the command

what to do" and "we have problems here and we have to resolve them," in one of these they start resolving their own problems.

So the first characteristic that arose was how they [the autonomous governments] would be named. This falls to tradition: the assembly named them. And these are very local governments, geographically very local. They didn't manage resources or projects or anything else at the beginning. They were just in charge of resolving community problems in their own community, like land disputes or land distribution—because remember that we took over lands [in the uprising] and now it had to be decided how they would be distributed. Later, as the organization of the autonomous municipalities advanced, we began to see that precisely where we weren't directly involved, the comandantes and comandantas, is where there was the most progress. The place where there was the most progress at that time was in Amparo Agua Tinta, which is almost to the southern border, far from all the other zones, in the zone of La Realidad but remote. This municipality, in 1998, four years after the uprising, already had a civil record. That is, they were able to have civil marriages, which no other municipality did. The others are just starting to now, at that time they only had religious marriages, and Agua Tinta was doing it then. They had civil marriages, public registers of births, deaths, and official appointments/duties, with a minimal paperwork to keep records. They were governing and giving an identity to the people, resolving problems. And this began to develop gradually into programs of education and health, though still very much in the mode where people from outside would come to give medicines or provide medical consultations and so on.

So as the EZLN began to delink itself from the labors of civil governance, the municipalities advanced and developed. The EZLN at that time was receiving international aid and sending it out as it saw fit; it wasn't of course for the EZLN in any case, but we were still deciding where it went and for what, because at that time the only person that knew the situation was the military commander for that region. This was who knew the territory, knew where things were the worst and where aid must be sent. And this was almost always material aid, like clothes, supplies, etc., when things were really bad. Later people began to offer productive projects and then the military commander began to say, well, now I don't know. And so the autonomous authorities said, well, that's us. And the autonomous municipalities began to grow, but still very unevenly. So the order was given that we [the EZLN] should back out of this part completely to see if the development would even out. And yes, after the order was given for military commanders not to get involved in civil decisions, things did even out more or less in the different zones and the compañeros were obligated to make the decisions. Because if you're asking "Hey what do I do," and the answer is "I don't know," then they have to decide themselves.

Later we had the problem of the land. There are about 32 autonomous territories. Between Zapatistas and non-Zapatistas that recognize the autonomous authorities, there would be around 300,000 indigenous persons—men, women, and children, Zapatistas and non-Zapatistas. So this relation develops and the issue comes up of what goes on between one municipality and another in the same zone. And the history that Moy tells is how the first society of autonomous municipalities formed, which was in the Tojolobal zone. Four autonomous municipalities say okay, we're going to start projects that work for all four of us and unite the strength of all four of us. They start with a warehouse for corn, which is what they produce there, because there, the coyote comes and buys cheap and then sells high. So [the municipalities] say, "We need a warehouse where we can store and sell at a better price, and the coyote can go to hell." So the

four municipalities get together, make the warehouse, and the coyote has to pay the warehouse price or go home without any corn.

This turns out well there and so we say, what we have to do is coordinate according to zones, and this is where things really begin to even out. Because there's also this problem that before, the autonomous municipalities only governed Zapatistas; only the Zapatista support bases recognized them. But as this structure develops, people that are not Zapatistas also begin to recognize them as their legitimate government. So we said, we're an organization for Zapatistas, but the government isn't just for Zapatistas. It should be for anyone who wants it. So the Good Government Councils are created to resolve problems between Zapatistas and non-Zapatistas. And Non-Zapatistas is different from anti-Zapatistas; these people aren't Zapatistas, but neither are they against us. So they recognize the government and they want to work with this government but they are not part of us. So this mediating role develops. Later [the Good Government Councils] function also to distribute projects and to serve as another interlocutor for civil society. Because before, this was always done through the military commanders. You had to talk to the military command in order to propose or talk about a project. So now in each zone people could talk directly with the local authorities.

The next challenge was how to make a team, a Zapatista political system. [The communities] said, they can't be permanent positions. They have to be rotating, just like in the autonomous municipalities. And it can't be that someone steps out of one position and steps into another. They have to go back and work the land because this is what guarantees that the political class is not corrupted, that there isn't a political class! So what happens is that every week or every 15 days, depending on the Good Government Council, the council changes. And this is a mess for the people that come from outside because they make an agreement with one council and later when they get there it's already another council. But for the people it has meant the demystification of the labor of governing. So every now and then Mrs. Tortilla-maker says, 'pretty soon I'm going to be the government and then after a little bit I'm going back to making tortillas.' So it's one more job to do; it's not being the boss. Not here. Here the problem isn't going to be who rules. The problem is the relationship that you build. Even though this frustrates those of you that come from outside and talk to one authority and later they change authorities on you, for us it has served us well. And that has been what has really launched the autonomous municipalities.

And the last element that I would add is this generation that grew. Apart from the delinking of the political-military apparatus, apart from the fact that this allowed for the recuperation of the traditional customs and practices for choosing governance democratically, for resolving problems via dialogue and consensus and so on, apart from the fact that the positions and responsibilities are rotating in order to prevent corruption or that it is detected rapidly, apart from all of this, the generation that were children during the uprising grew up with autonomous education, health, and have begun to hold delegated positions in the autonomous municipalities. But they are Others. They aren't the ones that rose up in arms. They are the ones that grew up in the resistance.

And the rotating and the length of turns are decided at the regional level?

Yes, by zone really. That is, let's say the Tzeltal people of the Jungle zone, which is this one, have one rhythm. The Tzeltal people in the zone of Altamirano have another. The Tzotzil people of the Highlands have another. Everybody decides for themselves the length of the [governing] turns. This has to do with how they see themselves, how long they need to learn, the distance

they have to travel in order to trade off, the cycles of each autonomous municipality, because the Good Government Councils come out of the autonomous municipalities. And the municipalities come from the communities, and that's how everything rotates.

The autonomous education and health systems also vary by zone?

Yes, health, education, and also agrarian issues, the problem of land. Because there are places that distribute in some ways and others in other ways, and there are places that don't have land, like the Highlands. But the education system in one zone like Roberto Barrios is decided there by the Chol people, and it doesn't have anything to do with La Realidad, which is Tojolobal.

8. I AM WE

There is another reverberation between movements that is seen and heard in the masks, in the "behind us we are you," of the Zapatistas which has been converted into the, "the other is I" of the Piqueteros,[6] in the recuperation of the "I am we" of the Black Panthers in the US in the 70's, in the "We are all Atenco/ We are all Oaxaca" of the current Other Campaign, and in the "We are all others!" of the other loves[7] and the transsexual community, adherents of the Sixth Declaration. This has been one of the most important lessons Zapatismo has given us, the challenge to the figure of the individual author, the individual subject, and individual production. And in combination with movements and contemporary tendencies like copyleft and the piracy cooperatives of artistic, communicative, and informational material, we are teaching each other that stories are collective, style is a communal production, and ideas are the accumulation of the histories and experiences of many. However, in many parts of the world, including Mexican society, the individualist subject is a very big obstacle to organization, and while in many places people have learned to think and produce in cooperation, it is still very hard for us dream collectively. How have the Zapatistas seen this paradox, if you see it that way?

We think that the only real guarantee of individuality, of subjectivity, is the collective. The problem is how the collective relates to its parts: if it is imposing a hegemony or respecting these differences. Just like this collective demands respect from other collectives in a larger movement, it must deal with the same issue among its parts. The fact that in the Other Campaign there are thousands of individuals does not mean that they don't have a group. It means that no group has satisfied them, that in no group have they felt respected in their individuality. Let's say that half of those more than 3,000 individuals are spies or police or whatever, and that the other 1,500 are authentic. Well those 1,500 could be the biggest collective yet if they all got together. But they haven't found a space where they feel like, 'I, as an individual with my faults and my strengths and my defects have a place, and I am going to be respected.' They may think that Zapatismo isn't going to include them, but it is going to open a space and it will not forget them. We think that it is just a question of time before they understand that it is in collective where our problems can be resolved. But the worlds offered are not the only ones possible. It may be that the collectives that appear are not the only ones possible, that maybe another must be made. In fact, many collectives are confronting this problem. They are coming apart, not because of political difference, but because there is no space for their individuality.

[6] Movement of unemployed workers in Argentina. *See* www.elkilombo.org for more information on the piquetero movement.

[7] "Other loves" is a term the Zapatistas have used to refer to non-heterosexual relationships.

And the individual-individual, well no! This doesn't exist! It is a myth of capitalism. Individualism in reality is the negation of the individuality of subjectivity. We think that it is in the Other Campaign, this huge collective, where these individuals are finding an identification. [They say,] "I'm not willing to join this or that, but I am willing to do such and such for this cause, and this is the space to do it. I paint, I sing, but I'm not going to any meetings." Or, "I sing well, I paint well, or I make recordings or I hand out fliers or I set up a table, but I'm not going to do anything else. I don't want to go to meetings to listen to speeches or any of that. But this great space guarantees me that my individual action will become collective in a cause."

This is what we need to convince the rest of the world. The fact that the only place where you can be yourself, whatever you consider that to be, is in a collective that guarantees you that respect and where you guarantee respect in return. In this case, your commitment is not to an organizational structure but to a cause. Now, if I am in a cause and in an organizational structure as well, then I commit myself to respect their decision-making processes, their way of working in collective, and there are people who don't go for that. What they're interested in is that their efforts enter into a cause. But even so, we think that the world that we are dreaming, in this great society of societies, the great collective of collectives that will be the world, only there can the individual *be*, without this crisis of identity of, "Who am I?" and "Where am I going?" knowing always that they have all the liberty to decide and create who they are and want to be. And that is what does not exist now.

9. ALL EMPIRES SEEM INVINCIBLE…

Many have asked you for your analysis of the current national situation. We want to take this opportunity to ask also about the political moment currently lived at the global level. Here we have in mind a few things in particular: first, the war in Iraq, which from any perspective is a failure, and Bush's subsequent power and popularity plummet in the US; two, the taking of power of various self-proclaimed leftist or progressive governments in Latin America; and third, the political and economic growth of various previously considered marginalized countries, as is the case with China, or India, or Brazil. How do you see these phenomena? Do you see in them, or outside of them, any hopeful signals? What could be the starting point to analyze these phenomena from a perspective from below?

All empires, or all of the great world oppressions, seemed invincible up to the eve of their fall. The Roman Empire, for example, the Nazis in Germany, and now that of North America, or more generally of neoliberalism, as we call this stage of capitalism. The fact that more and more frequently war is resorted to, in order to defeat what was before defeated by an influx of capital, hides the fact that the science is the same. When the Iraq war started, a leftist intellectual, well, they say leftist, Regis Debray, of France, said, "How stupid the North Americans are. They could have overturned Hussein and conquered Iraq by making them loans." The International Monetary Fund could give the loans, indebt the country, do what it has done in other countries, and it will have Iraq and the entire Middle East on their knees. But Mr. Debray and the European intellectuals were forgetting that war is essential to capitalism, that destruction is essential to capitalism. War is an industry that generates profit for capitalism. In this case, it wasn't about dominating Iraq; it was about generating profit. And the form to generate profit was with a war.

Like in Vietnam, like in other places, the North American government has realized that neither military tech-nology nor the number of men available is important in order to conquer a territory. That it is only possible to conquer it completely if it destroys that territory completely, and total destruction is not in [the US'] plans at this point. So it turns out that it isn't enough to get rid of Hussein and the Iraqi army, but that they would have to get rid of the entire Iraqi population in order to defeat the resistance. So where the large companies are already installed, those that arrived behind the North American army, they say, wait a minute, where is the market? A desert market of buyers and sellers is of no use to me, not even as a production base; we're going to have to import from everywhere, workers yes, but also the buyers—producers *and* buyers. At which point we get to this absurd logic of capitalism where you have to make war to make profit and then stop the war so that the profits come through, and this is reaching its limit in Iraq, if you look at it from above.

In the case of the other colossus that is arising, which is what is putting the gringos on alert, it turns out that the expansion of Chinese society is generating a market worth millions, and everyone is asking themselves, who is going to build these houses? Who is going to feed these people? Who is going to dress these millions of Chinese? The Chinese government plans to concentrate the population, because it is so large, in great metropolises. Magnificent idea some say, but others say, who will be the firm contracted to build these metropolises? Because that's where the profit will be. And making war with China is unthinkable, because it's not just the territory but also the people! So they [the North Americans] say, here we are all tangled up in Iraq and the market is over there, and the Europeans are there and the Japanese are there and the whole world is saying that over there is this great mass of people that needs someone to sell them things, because the Chinese don't have that. They [China] are saying, "Who wants to come sell?" And everyone is saying, "*Vamonos*!" It is a market infinitely superior to that which opened when the Soviet Union fell, when all of a sudden the North Americans said, "Bingo!" And they began to come in and it turned out much better than if they had defeated the Soviet Union militarily, because the market stayed intact, that is, the producers and the consumers.

So, broadly speaking, we see all this. And in neoliberalism, the fight is for the market. It doesn't matter what is destroyed in the process: the fundamental logic is profit. So when a war produces profit, they are going to make war. When stopping war makes profit, they are going to stop the war. But on the other side are the tendencies that are below, subterranean, disperse. Evidently, the Ford Directory of corporate giants are not the only ones able to convince the North American government; it also takes the Iraqi resistance movement, just like occurred in Vietnam and in other places.

In this great struggle for the market, between these companies fighting for the market, in this logic of profit, there is something that is leftover, and that is the political class. [In this logic they ask], "These politicians from before, why do we need them? Why, if a business can do the job better? Why do we want political parties if we can put in the president that we want?" Because, now no one even remembers, but Bush was installed via electoral fraud in the country that proclaims itself the defender of democracy! A scandalous fraud at that, and documented, provable! That is, he got to the presidency without having the majority of the votes, of those that they counted that is. So, why do we need the political class if we can put in the president that we want or the government that we want? The United Nations is a place to deposit money exempt from taxes, like a world telethon; that is the UN, because it does absolutely nothing else. So, what do we do then with these politicians? There the problem is that the big companies say

[to the political class]: "Okay, you guys tell us why we shouldn't sacrifice you. Convince us you're worthwhile." And thus begins the dispute over who will administer this crisis. And it turns out that the big powers don't necessarily conform to the proposals of the Right. If there is a proposal from the Left that guarantees them a better administration, they go with that one.

About a decade ago, when a leftist candidate was about to win—in Uruguay or Paraguay I think it was—someone at the World Bank was asked if this wasn't going to be a problem, especially with the tradition of dictatorial regimes against the Left there, and the official said no! If it's a good administration of our political economic policy, whoever is fine. And in effect, ever since then, for the last 10 years to date, these governments have been taking power and have turned out to be excellent administrators [of neoliberalism]. Lula is the best example of the fact that a left-handed government functions better for this in Latin America. No other country in Latin America has as many economic successes as Brazil, economic successes for those above that is, and this is a government supposedly of the Left. So we said, this option is going to continue appearing here and there, and we thought it was going to happen in Mexico. But it looks like the possibility of Lopez Obrador in power frightened these people, and the people with the money said no, better not. But if they had been more prudent and not so greedy…

So we see in the whole world this tendency from above to fight for markets, not just this internal agreement in North America, but also in the European economy once the European Union was consolidated, in the resurgence of Japan, and now with the Chinese there saying, "Here I am, I buy, I sell." And [the Chinese] are calculating that whatever happens, whoever they let in, they are moving up as a world economic power that can sell and buy and in some moment will be decisive in the geopolitics of that hemisphere. But on the other side are these sparks of rebellion that appear on the national level, and that later have these great flashes like in parts of the alter-global movement that may seem still to be very small and dispersed but which are going to be a great world power. But that is how history works. On the eve of the fall of the Roman Empire, the appearance of the Barbarians here and there was thought to be nothing to worry about. And that's how the Roman Empire reacted until they realized what was happening, and by then, there was nothing left. The problem isn't this [lack of resistance]; we think that the problem is that in addition to constructing the network that makes world linkage possible, world solidarity, a world network that is, when all this begins to surge from the bottom, there must simultaneously be a discussion and a proposal: What now? Because if we don't respond to this question, we return to what was before.

And here I want to include a parenthesis. If Kilombo hadn't posed the question after the movement against the war in Iraq, "What now? After this, what?" they would have returned to their normal lives. They would have went on like nothing had happened. They would be living and eating and breathing like anybody else. It is when this question is asked, "And now what? We're going to do this, but then what?" that the opportunity arises for history not to repeat itself. Because if not, it seems to me that it will repeat. You can make a global movement and take down everything that exists now, and not offer an alternative and come back to make something equally bad or worse. This is what has happened in the history of the world. We can't always say that the world that comes out of the destruction of the previous one is better. That's just not true. The world that the Spanish built wasn't better than that of the Aztecs, which was already bad—the Aztec Empire—because it wasn't an alternative. So it could be just this, a historic anecdote, everything that the museums study, everything that was the North American Empire or the French Empire or the British Empire, if there still is one; the problem is if we're

not just going to make the same thing all over again. In another interview they asked us, what is Marcos' worst nightmare? That nightmare would be that after all this, we would end up the same. That we would return to being the same thing, with another name, with another face, that the indigenous peoples in Mexico would be free at the cost of the submission of the mestizos. That is a nightmare. That would be to change history but only to change its protagonist and not its path. And what we want to change is the path. That there are mestizos, indigenous, everybody able to do their own thing, with good relationships to each other, not one above or over the other. So the nightmare would be that we would win and we would lose winning. Or that in winning what we wanted, we did what we didn't want to do.

10. AQUÍ ESTAMOS CABRONES!

How do you see, from the perspective of the Other Campaign, the importance of the burgeoning immigrant movement in the United States? Did the May 1st marches of last year in US cities, which were, it must be said, the biggest one-day protests in the history of the United States, carry some resonance for Zapatismo? What do you think could be the foundations for a common imagination between this movement and Zapatismo in Mexico?

To die for! This movement is the best example of the fact that things aren't until they are. Because if you remember how the media managed this—all of the [Mexican] media, national but also the more leftist ones—the image of North America they were creating was that the people there were worried about whether they were going to have the right to vote or not, and for whom they were going to vote. So they were asking if the [Mexican] Senate was going to approve the vote from the exterior, if they were going to be able to run campaigns there. And the media correspondents were saying, "Our compatriots in the US, the migrants, are concerned about this. And they're also worried about if they're going to get hit by the Minutemen, by these assassins, all this that the Texas ranchers were doing." And then all of a sudden they have a march, and it's a huge march, and everyone said, "Of course, we saw this coming." But it's not true! Nobody saw it coming! There wasn't anything that said this was going to happen.

I think the most surprised were the migrants themselves, who said, "*Cabrón*, there are so many of us!" The reaction of Power to try to co-opt and control as many of the visible leaders as possible, to take the movement down, was apparently successful. I say "apparently," because it's the same thing in Oaxaca. It looks like the movement is over and it turns out that the lessons learned there stuck, or that they continue germinating there and that they will arise again.

The problem that this great migrant movement—in all of its differences—brought up is the same that the Other Campaign is addressing. And this was summed up well by that little girl [in Tijuana] who said, "Here we are." The problem isn't what are they going to do with us. The problem is that here we are and we want *this*. Not if we're leaving or if they're going to send us back. They have to get used to the idea that we're here. This is our identity, whatever that may be for each one of us. And the world has to get used to the idea that I exist, that here I am.

We think that there is where this bridge will be built, that this is a great movement independent of its political affiliations and its identities, and it has in the Other Campaign and the Sixth International a space to encounter other realities. Because at some point, someone always comes to us to try to get some kind of political backing in order to hegemonize the rest of the migrant movement in the United States. And we say, "No, it's not that there aren't others [in the move-

ment]. There are others." "But these others are bad," they tell us. [And we respond], "No, all are migrants; it is their identity." What they are disputing is who has the role of interlocutor with those in power. We say we're not interested in who has this role, or in giving political backing to anyone. [The Other Campaign] is the space for you to meet the indigenous peoples who are here but who also have people on the other side—the O'odham, the Kiliwa, the Kumiai, and also the Zapatistas, the Náhuatl, the Zapotecos. This is the space where all these can meet. And this is the space where the Zapotec from Oaxaca can say, "I am Zapotec from Oaxaca," and another will say, "I'm Zapotec from New York," and so on.

And at the same moment that they are saying this, that is exactly what we are doing. We loved it [the May 1st marches], because they didn't warn anybody! It was like January 1st of 1994, when everyone said, "Well they surprised us!" Well yes! Because everyone was looking somewhere else. But if it was possible that tens of thousands of indigenous in the mountains where there is no communication were preparing an uprising for 10 years and nobody realized it, how is it possible that hundreds of thousands of migrants in the cities, where there is so much communication, organized this and nobody realized it? Not the journalists, the editorialists, the analysts, not even the FBI or the CIA! One has to say, well, if they haven't had more towers fall, they must not have any more towers! If this is their security system! It's ridiculous! How can it be that all this was being generated, because it wasn't just 10 or 20 that came out… It seems to me that in the American Union, a big march is 5,000, 10,000 people, that even that is nearly unprecedented.

Or something really amazing would be the million that marched in the people of color march in Washington years ago. But this, millions of people, simultaneously, unprecedented… Man, what an intelligence service! This would be cause to take down the chief, no? And instead they gave him another job! It's true! They gave Bush another four years! But oh well, these things happen in whatever part of the world…

And this is a government worried about its internal security. And this [migrant] reality has us quite happy, because, what we were told in '94 was, "Listen, you all keep it up and grow and good luck there, but the gringos are not going to permit it. It's going to be like Vietnam." And I said, "No, Mexico is farther from the United States than Vietnam." "How?" they ask. Because we're already there. We are inside the American Union, and there weren't as many then ['94] as there are now. That is, you can't just attack like that. It's not like you can go to the people and say,

"Look, there are some horrible yellow Chinese that want to hurt us, and we're going after them." Even when they did that, the people didn't swallow it. And now, to say that we're going to attack these people who come from your same land, it's not that easy.

So over all, this is how we saw the movement there; it made us very happy. We laughed quite a bit at the editorialists and analysts. Because later they wanted to say, "Well you guys didn't see it coming," and I told them, "Noooooo, I remember what *you* wrote about the migrant movement *before* this march! You don't remember now?" This is what they always say about us, that the bad thing, well, I don't know if it's bad; they say, "But the thing is that the compañeros remember everything!" And I said yes! We do remember everything! [Laughing]

Oh, and the Seris said that [about identity] too, "We're not part of Mexico. We don't recognize Mexico. We are the Comca'ac nation. We are a nation." I guess we'll see how they do it. And why not?

11. LOVE: A POLITICS

Many times you have said that this movement is the greatest lesson of love that these lands have ever seen. Another time, in Tijuana, you said that the EZ prefers to use the word "respect" instead of "love." This concept, love or respect, how do you conceptualize it as a political concept, perhaps the most important political concept of our times, the concept that lacks nothing?

What we said was that the problem of love is a problem of respect. That love understood as possession, property, is not what we think is love. That fundamentally a relationship, of whatever kind, not just in a couple but between people who relate to each other, has to be based in respect. If not, sooner or later it becomes a kind of domination or destruction. I say that without condemning any of the healthy perversions like sadomasochism and all that, which are also ways to relate. [Laughing]

The problem of respect is toward the Other. We say that when we as Zapatistas say we love this land, it is that we respect it. And we look for the best for it, not according to our criteria but according to what we understand from [the land] itself. Because it's not the same to say, "I love you and I want what's best for you but according to what I think is best for you, and I don't give a shit what you think.' That's not respect. We say that this has to be according to what each person thinks. And this is the reading that one does, where one commits errors or finds truths. In this case, that is the reading the Zapatista indigenous peoples make of the land. That is respect. It [the land] says, "The best thing for me is that you protect me, you care for me; they are trying to destroy me, etc." We say, we must do something.

Whatever political relationship that is not based in respect is a manipulation. Well-intentioned or bad-intentioned, it doesn't matter, because it is a manipulation. If you don't respect the thinking of the other, of their word, if you don't speak to them clearly, then you don't respect them and you are manipulating them. There was a compañera who was asking, "Okay, all this about peaceful struggle that the Zapatistas are saying, that's a strategy right? I mean really you are thinking in terms of armed struggle, right? I mean, because with the army and all!" And I told her, "Do you believe that we are going to be dishonest with people, telling them that it is a peaceful struggle and to sign on up but really we're preparing an armed struggle?" Of course not! We would say so, publicly. We would say, "Compañeros, we're going to say this is a peaceful fight, but really it's going to be armed struggle." [Not to tell them] would be to disrespect them, to manipulate them. And we can't construct a political relationship like that. Or we could, but that's not the relationship that we want; we want something else, a new relationship. If you're going to do something, good or bad or whatever, you have to say so clearly. And the people who are with you, who support you, or who are your compañeros, in that they don't just support you but you mutually support each other in a project, they have to know that you spoke straight. Now if it turns out badly, that's something else, but they have to know you didn't fool them, that you didn't manipulate them. And to do that you have to respect them, and to respect them you need to know them.

We can't construct a relationship of respect with the Chicano movement, or with the Mexicans on the other side, or with the migrant movement, or with the movement of people of color, or with the movement of all the identities that are going to arise—I'm thinking, for example, of the communities of Asian origin that already have their own logic in the American Union—if we don't know them. And we say that this is not about making an introduction, about exchanging cards. It's about creating the space where we can introduce ourselves and get to know each other.

Where we can do this thing of, 'I am, I am here, and these are my problems. I'm telling you so that you know me, not so that you help me or have pity on me or admire me or learn from me.' Not with this enthusiasm for dependency. But rather, "Look at me, this is my face." And then if you like it or not, well, that is very much your problem.

That's why we said, starting there, we can construct respect or we can construct a relationship of domination.

There are people who come to see, to figure out what this is about, and who say, "Here, good, here they're doing something with political purchase." Or, "Here, no." So their interest is where there is political purchase, where they can reap some benefit. And where they can't, then no. But if there is a relationship of respect, then it's not that way. So the knowing each other follows respecting each other. That is what has to be constructed.

And this is what we say is a demonstration of love: respect. This, along with subjectivity, is something difficult to construct in these times. That is, in capitalism, it is difficult to construct a relationship of respect, even between two individuals, and that much more difficult in collectivity, in society, or in a nation. What respect can you say the North American government has for its people? At the hour that it turns out that, "Oh, guess what, the weapons we were searching for in Iraq, well they didn't really exist. And we knew they didn't exist but we needed something to tell you in order to be able to attack." And what respect does CNN or the other major North American media companies have when they tell the people, "We fooled you; the images that we showed of Iraq aren't of Iraq. Or there were more but we only used these." And what respect does the teacher have for the student, the student for his/her classmate, neighbor for neighbor, and so on, if there is nothing in this society telling you it's possible to create a relationship based in respect? And we say that is the only solid relationship it is possible to create—that which is based in respect. And that is what we want to do, and what we are learning to do. And we make mistakes. Sometimes we make mistakes in saying, "I am thinking you are saying this," and you aren't saying that. Take land for example, or the example of indigenous peoples, of student groups, or of the young people who we saw on the journey, of landless peasants, of the poor, or the migrants, the women, etc. We say that what we agree upon, even when we are hearing wrong or understanding wrong, is that we need a space to listen to each other.

Appendix: SIXTH DECLARATION OF THE LACANDON JUNGLE

Zapatista Army of National Liberation
(EZLN)

This is our simple word which seeks to touch the hearts of humble and simple people like ourselves, but people who are also, like us, dignified and rebellious. This is our simple word to tell what our path has been and where we are now, to explain how we see the world and our country, to say what we are thinking of doing and how we are thinking of doing it, and to invite other persons to walk with us in something very great which is called Mexico and something greater which is called the world. This is our simple word in order to inform all honest and noble hearts what it is we want in Mexico and the world. This is our simple word, because it is our idea to call on those who are like us and to join together with them, everywhere they are living and struggling.

I. What We Are

We are the zapatistas of the EZLN, although we are also called "neo-zapatistas." Now, we, the zapatistas of the EZLN, rose up in arms in January of 1994 because we saw how widespread had become the evil wrought by the powerful who only humiliated us, stole from us, imprisoned us, and killed us, and no one was saying anything or doing anything. That is why we said, "Ya Basta!" that no longer were we going to allow them to treat us as inferior, to treat us worse than animals. And we also said we wanted democracy, liberty, and justice for all Mexicans, although we were concentrated on the Indian peoples. Because it so happened that we, the EZLN, were almost all indigenous from here in Chiapas, but we did not want to struggle just for our own good, or just for the good of the indigenous of Chiapas, or just for the good of the Indian peoples of Mexico. We wanted to fight along with everyone who was humble and simple like ourselves and who was in great need and who suffered from exploitation and thievery by the rich and their bad governments here, in our Mexico, and in other countries in the world.

And so our small history is that we grew tired of exploitation by the powerful, so we organized in order to defend ourselves and to fight for justice. In the beginning there were not many of us, just a few, going this way and that, talking with and listening to other people like us. We did that for many years, and we did it in secret, without making a stir. In other words, we joined forces in silence. That took us about 10 years and then we grew, and then there were many thousands of us. We trained ourselves quite well in politics and weapons, and, suddenly, when the rich were throwing their New Year's Eve parties, we fell upon their cities and just took them over. And we left a message to everyone that here we are, that they have to take notice of us. And the rich were good and scared and sent their great armies to do away with us, just like they always do when the exploited rebel, they send orders for them to be done away with. But we were not

done away with at all, because we had prepared ourselves quite well prior to the war, and we had made ourselves strong in our mountains. And there were the armies looking for us and throwing their bombs and bullets at us, and making plans to kill off all the indigenous at one time, because they did not know who was a zapatista and who was not. And we were running and fighting, fighting and running, just like our ancestors had done. Without giving up, without surrendering, without being defeated.

And then the people from the cities went out into the streets and began shouting for an end to the war. And we stopped our war, and we listened to these brothers and sisters from the city who were telling us to try to reach an arrangement or an accord with the bad governments, so that the problem could be resolved without a massacre. We paid attention to them, because they are what we call "the people," that is the Mexican people. And so we set aside the fire and took up the word.

And then the governments said they would indeed be well-behaved, and they would engage in dialogue, and they would make accords, and they would fulfill them. And we said good, but we also thought it would be good for us to know those people who went out into the streets in order to stop the war. So, while we were engaging in dialogue with the bad governments, we were also talking with those people, and we saw that most of them were humble and simple people like ourselves, and that both, we and they, understood quite well why we were fighting. And we called those people "civil society," because most of them did not belong to political parties; rather they were common, ev-eryday people, like us, simple and humble people.

But it turned out that the bad governments did not want a good agreement, it was their underhanded trickery to say that they were going to talk and to reach agreements while all the while they were preparing attacks to eliminate us once and for all. And so then they attacked us several times, but they did not defeat us, because we resisted well, and many people throughout the world mobilized. So then the bad governments thought that the problem was that many people were seeing what was happening with the EZLN, and they started their plan of acting as if nothing were going on. Meanwhile they surrounded us, they laid siege to us in hopes that, since our mountains are indeed remote, people would forget about us, since zapatista lands were so far away. And every so often the bad governments would try to deceive us or to attack us, like in February of 1995 when they came at us with a huge number of soldiers, but they did not defeat us. Because, as it began to be said, we were not alone, and many people supported us, and we resisted well.

So then the bad governments had to make agreements with the EZLN, and those agreements were called the "San Andrés Accords" because the municipality where those accords were signed was called "San Andrés." And we were not alone in those dialogues, it wasn't just us speaking with people from the bad governments. We invited many people and organizations who were, or are, engaged in the struggle for the Indian peoples of Mexico, and everyone spoke their word, and everyone reached agreement as to how we were going to speak with the bad governments. And that is how that dialogue was, not just the zapatistas on one side and the governments on the other. But rather, with the zapatistas were the Indian peoples of Mexico and those who supported them. The bad governments said in those accords that they were indeed going to recognize the rights of the Indian peoples of Mexico, that they were going to respect their culture, and that they were going to make all of this law in the Constitution. But then, once they had signed the accords, the bad governments acted as if they had forgotten about them, and many years passed, and the accords were not fulfilled. Quite the opposite, the government attacked the indigenous in

order to make them back down in the struggle, as they did December 22, 1997, the date on which Zedillo ordered the killing of 45 men, women, old ones, and children in the town in Chiapas called ACTEAL. This immense crime was not so easily forgotten, and it was a demonstration of how it does not touch the hearts of the bad governments to attack and assassinate those who rebel against injustices. And, while all of that was going on, we zapatistas were putting our all into trying to get the accords fulfilled and in resisting in the mountains of the Mexican southeast.

And so we began speaking with other Indian peoples of Mexico and their organizations, and we made an agreement with them that we were going to struggle together for the same thing, for the recognition of indigenous rights and culture. Now we were also being supported by many people all over the world and by persons who were well-respected and whose word was great because they were great intellectuals, artists, and scientists from Mexico and from all over the world. And we also held international encounters, that is, we got together with persons from America and from Asia and from Europe and from Africa and from Oceania to talk, and we learned of their struggles and their ways, and we said these were "intergalactic" encounters, just to be silly and because we had indeed invited those from other planets, but apparently they did not come, or perhaps they did come but they did not say so clearly.

But in any case the bad governments did not keep their word, and so we made a plan to talk with many Mexicans so they would support us. First, in 1997, we held a march to Mexico City called "of the 1,111," because one compañero or compañera from each zapatista village went, but the bad government did not pay any attention. And then, in 1999, we held a referendum throughout the entire country, and there it was seen that the majority were indeed in agreement with the demands of the Indian peoples, but again the bad governments did not pay any attention. And finally, in 2001, we held what was called the "march for indigenous dignity," which had much support from millions of Mexicans and people from other countries, and it arrived to where the senators and representatives were, in the Congress of the Union, in order to demand the recognition of the Mexican indigenous.

But it turned out that no, the politicians from the PRI, the PAN, and the PRD reached an agreement among themselves, and they simply would not recognize indigenous rights and culture. That was in April of 2001, and the politicians demonstrated quite clearly there that they had no decency whatsoever, that they were shameless swine who thought only about making their money as the bad politicians they were. All of this must be remembered, because you'll see that now they are going to say they will indeed recognize indigenous rights, but it is a lie they are telling so we will vote for them. They already had their chance, and they did not keep their word.

So then we saw quite clearly that there was no point to dialogue and negotiation with the bad governments of Mexico. That it was a waste of time for us to be talking with the politicians, because neither their hearts nor their words were honest. They were crooked and they lied, saying that they would keep their word but they did not. In other words, on that day, when the politicians from the PRI, PAN, and PRD approved a law that was useless, they killed the dialogue once and for all and they made it clear that it does not matter what they had agree to and sign, because their word is no good. So from then on we did not have any contact with the federal powers because we understood that dialogue and negotiation had failed as a result of those political parties. We saw that blood did not matter to them, nor did death, suffering, mobilizations, consultations, efforts, national and international pronouncements, encounters, accords, signatures, commitments. And so the political class not only closed, one more time, the door to the Indian peoples, they also delivered a mortal blow to the peaceful resolution — through dialogue

and negotiation — of the war. It can also no longer be believed that accords will be fulfilled with whomever they are made. Take note of that and learn from our experience.

So we saw all of that, and we wondered in our hearts what we were going to do.

And the first thing we saw was that our heart was not the same as before, when we began our struggle. It was larger, because now we had touched the hearts of many good people. And we also saw that our heart was more hurt, more wounded. And it was not wounded by the deceit of the bad governments, but because, when we touched the hearts of others, we also touched their sorrows. It was as if we were seeing ourselves in a mirror.

II. Where We Are Now

Then, as the zapatistas that we are, we thought that it was not enough to stop engaging in dialogue with the government, but that we must continue on in the struggle, in spite of those lazy parasites of politicians. The EZLN then decided that it would carry out, from its side, the San Andrés Accords regarding indigenous rights and culture (in other words, "unilateral," because it was just one side). For four years, since the middle of 2001 until the middle of 2005, we have devoted ourselves to this and to other things that we are going to tell you about here.

Well, we then began putting a lot of effort into the Zapatista Autonomous Municipalities in Rebellion — which is how the peoples organized to govern themselves — in order to make them stronger. This method of autonomous government was not simply invented by the EZLN, but rather comes from centuries of indigenous resistance and from the zapatistas' own experience. It is the self-governance of the communities. In other words, no one from outside comes to govern, but the people themselves decide, among themselves, who governs and how, and, if they do not obey, they are removed. That is, if the person who is supposed to govern does not obey the people, they pursue that person, that person is removed from authority, and another comes in.

But then we saw that the Autonomous Municipalities were not equal. There were some that were more advanced and which had more support from civil society, and others were neglected. We needed to organize things to make them more on a par with each other. And we also saw that the EZLN, with its political-military component, was involving itself in decisions that belonged to the democratic authorities, "civilians," as they say. And here the problem is that the political-military component of the EZLN is not democratic, because it is an army. And we saw that the military being above and the democratic below was not good, because what is democratic should not be decided militarily, it should be the reverse: the democratic-political governing above, and the military obeying below. Or perhaps it would be better with nothing below, with everything completely level, without any military, and that is why the zapatistas are soldiers, so that there will not have to be soldiers anymore. Anyway, what we did about this problem was to begin separating the political-military from the autonomous and democratic aspects of organization in the zapatista communities. And so, actions and decisions which had previously been handled by the EZLN were passed, little by little, to the democratically elected authorities in the villages. It is easy to say, of course, but it was very difficult in practice, because many years had passed, first in the preparation for the war and then the war itself, and the political-military aspects had become customary. But, regardless, we managed to do it, because it is our way to do what we say we are going to do, because if not, why are we go around saying things and then not do them.

That is how the Good Government Juntas were born, in August of 2003, and, through them, self-learning and the exercise of "rule by obeying" has continued.

From that time and until the middle of 2005, the EZLN leadership has no longer involved itself in giving orders in civil matters, but it has accompanied and supported the authorities who are democratically elected by the people. It has also kept watch that the people as well as national and international civil society are kept well-informed concerning the aid that is received and how it is used. And now we are passing this work of vigilance over the good governments to the zapatista support bases, with temporary positions which are rotated so that everyone learns and carries out this work. Because we believe that a people which does not watch over its leaders is condemned to be enslaved, and we fought to be free, not to change masters every six years.

The EZLN, during these 4 years, also handed over to the Good Government Juntas and the Autonomous Municipalities the aid and contacts which they had attained throughout Mexico and the world during these years of war and resistance. The EZLN, during that time, had also been building economic and political support which gave the zapatista communities fewer difficulties as they advanced in the building of their autonomy and in improving their living conditions. It was not much, but it was far better than what they had prior to the beginning of the uprising in January of 1994. If you look at one of those studies the government makes, you will see that the only indigenous communities which have improved their living conditions — whether that be in health, education, food or housing — were those which are in zapatista territory, where our villages are. And all of that has been possible because of the progress made by the zapatista villages and because of all the support which has been received from good and noble persons, whom we call "civil societies," and from their organizations throughout the world. It is as though all of these people have made "another world is possible" a reality, but through actions, not just words.

And the villages have made good progress. Now there are more compañeros and compañeras who are learning to govern. And — little by little — there are more women going into this work, but there is still a lack of respect for the compañeras, and a lack of their participation in the work of the struggle. And, also through the Good Government Juntas, coordination has been improved between the Autonomous Municipalities and in the resolution of problems with other organizations and with the official authorities. There has also been much improvement in the projects in the communities, and the distribution of projects and aid given by civil society from all over the world has become more balanced. Health and education have improved, although there is still a good deal lacking for it to be what it should be. The same is true for housing and food, and in some areas there has been much improvement with the problem of land, because the lands recovered from the finqueros [large property owners] are being redistributed, though there are areas which continue to suffer from a lack of lands to cultivate. And there has been great improvement in the support from national and international civil society, because previously everyone took aid wherever they wanted, and now the Good Government Juntas are directing them to where the greatest need exists. And, similarly, everywhere there are more compañeros and compañeras who are learning to relate to persons from other parts of Mexico and of the world; they are learning to respect and to demand respect. They are learning that there are many worlds, and that everyone has their place, their time, and their way, and therefore there must be mutual respect between everyone.

We, the zapatistas of the EZLN, have devoted this time to our principal strength, to the people who support us. And the situation has in fact improved some. No one can say that the zapatista

organization and struggle has been for nothing, but rather, even if they were to do away with us completely, our struggle has indeed been of some use.

But it is not just the zapatista villages which have grown, the EZLN has also grown. Because what has happened during this time is that new generations have renewed our entire organization. That is, they have added a whole new strength. The comandantes and comandantas who were in their maturity at the beginning of the uprising in 1994, now have the wisdom gained in the war and through 12 years of dialogue with thousands of men and women from all over the world. The members of the CCRI, the zapatista political-organizational leadership, is now counseling and directing the new ones who are entering our struggle, as well as those who are holding leadership positions. For some time now, these "committees" (which is what we call them) have been preparing an entire new generation of comandantes and comandantas who, following a period of instruction and testing, are beginning to learn the work of organizational leadership and to take on these duties. And another thing is that our insurgents, insurgentas, militants, local and regional leaders, as well as our support bases who were young people at the beginning of the uprising, are now mature men and women, combat veterans and natural leaders in their units and communities. And those who were children in that January of '94 are now young people who have grown up in the resistance, and they have been trained in the rebel dignity held up by their elders throughout these 12 years of war. These young people have a political, technical and cultural training that we who began the zapatista movement did not have. More and more this youth is now, sustaining our troops as well as leadership positions in the organization. And of course all of us have seen the deceits of the Mexican political class and the destruction their actions have caused in our patria. And we have seen the great injustices and massacres that neoliberal globalization causes throughout the world. But we will speak to you of that later.

And so the EZLN has resisted 12 years of war, of military, political, ideological and economic attacks, of siege, of harassment, of persecution, and they have not vanquished us. We have not sold out nor surrendered, and we have made progress. More compañeros from many places have entered into the struggle so that, instead of getting weaker after so many years, we have become stronger. Of course there are problems which can be resolved by separating more the political-military from the civil-democratic. But there are other things, the most important things, such as our demands for which we struggle, which have not been fully achieved.

To our way of thinking, and what we see in our heart, we have reached a point where we cannot go any further, and where in fact we could lose everything we have if we remain as we are and do nothing more in order to move forward. The hour has come to take a risk once again and to take a step which is dangerous but worthwhile. Because, perhaps united with other social sectors who suffer the same needs as we do, it will be possible to achieve what we need and what we deserve. A new step forward in the indigenous struggle is only possible if the indigenous join together with workers, campesinos, students, teachers, employees… the workers of the city and the countryside.

III. How We See the World

Now we are going to explain to you how we, the zapatistas, see what is going on in the world. We see that capitalism is the strongest force right now. Capitalism is a social system, a way in which a society goes about organizing things and people, who has and who has not, who gives

orders and who obeys. In capitalism, there are some people who have money, or capital, and factories and stores and fields and many things, and there are others who have nothing but their strength and their knowledge in order to work. In capitalism, those who have money and things give the orders, and those who only have their ability to work obey.

So capitalism means that there a few who have great wealth, but it's not that they won a prize, or found a treasure, or inherited from a relative, but rather they obtained that wealth through the exploitation of the work of the many. So capitalism is based on the exploitation of the workers, which means they exploit the workers to extract all the profits they can. This is done unjustly, because they do not pay workers what their work is worth. Instead they give the worker a salary that barely allows them eat a little and to rest for a bit, and the next day they goes back to work in exploitation machine, whether in the countryside or in the city.

And capitalism also makes its wealth from plunder, or theft, because it takes away from others whatever it wants — land, for example, and natural resources. So capitalism is a system where the thieves are free and admired and used as model examples.

And, in addition to exploiting and plundering, capitalism represses because it imprisons and kills those who rebel against injustice.

Capitalism is most interested in merchandise, because buying or selling merchandise produces profits. So capitalism turns everything into merchandise, it makes merchandise of people, of nature, of culture, of history, of conscience. According to capitalism, everything must be able to be bought and sold. And it hides everything behind the merchandise so we don't see the exploitation that it carries out. And then the merchandise is bought and sold in a market. And the market, in addition to being used for buying and selling, is also used to hide the exploitation of the workers. In the market, for example, we see coffee in its little package or its pretty little jar, but we do not see the campesino who suffered in order to harvest the coffee, and we do not see the coyote who paid the campesino so cheaply for his work, and we do not see the workers in the large company working their hearts out to package the coffee. Or we see an appliance for listening to music like cumbias, rancheras, or corridos, or whatever, and we think that it is really good because it has a good sound, but we do not see the worker in the maquiladora who struggled for many hours hooking up the cables and putting the parts of the appliance together, or that they barely paid her a pittance of money, and that she lives far away from work and spends a lot on the trip, and, and that, in addition, she runs the risk of being kidnapped, raped, and killed as happens in Ciudad Juárez in Mexico.

So we see merchandise in the market, but we do not see the exploitation with which it was made. And capitalism needs many markets… or a very large market, a world market.

And so the capitalism of today is not the same as before, when the rich were content with exploiting the workers in their own countries. Now they are on a path which is called Neoliberal Globalization. This globalization means that they no longer control the workers in one or several countries, but that the capitalists are trying to dominate everything all over the world. And the world, or Planet Earth, is also called the "globe", and that is why they say "globalization," or the entire world.

And neoliberalism is the idea that capitalism is free to dominate the entire world, and that oh well, you have to resign yourself and conform and not make a fuss, in other words, not rebel. So neoliberalism is like the theory, the plan, of capitalist globalization. And neoliberalism has its economic, political, military and cultural plans. All of those plans have to do with dominating

everyone, and they repress or marginalize anyone who doesn't obey so that their rebellious ideas aren't passed on to others.

Then, in neoliberal globalization, the big capitalists who live in the powerful countries, like the United States, want the entire world to be made into something like a big business where merchandise is produced, and into a big market, a world market for buying and selling the entire world and for hiding the exploitation of the whole world.

Then the global capitalists get into everything everywhere, in all the countries, in order to do their big business, that is, their big exploitation. They respect nothing, and they come in however they wish, as if they were conquering other countries. That is why we zapatistas say that neoliberal globalization is a war of conquest of the entire world, a world war, a war being waged by capitalism for global domination. Sometimes that conquest is by armies who invade a country and conquer it by force. But sometimes it is with the economy, in other words, the big capitalists put their money into another country or they lend it money, but on the condition that the country obey what they tell them to do. And they also insert their ideas, that is, the capitalist culture, which is the culture of merchandise, of profits, of the market.

Then the one which wages the conquest, capitalism, does as it wants, it destroys or changes what it does not like and eliminates what gets in its way, for example, those who do not produce or buy or sell modern merchandise, or those who rebel against that order. And they despise those who are of no use to them. That is why the indigenous get in the way of neoliberal capitalism, and that is why they despise them and want to eliminate them. And neoliberal capitalism also gets rid of the laws that do not allow them to exploit and to have a lot of profit. They demand that everything can be bought and sold, and, since capitalism has all the money, it buys everything. Capitalism destroys the countries it conquers with neoliberal globalization, but it also wants to rearrange everything, to make it over again, but in its own way, a way which benefits capitalism and which doesn't allow anything to get in its way. So neoliberal globalization, capitalism, destroys what exists in these countries, it destroys their culture, their language, their economic system, their political system, and it also destroys the ways in which those who live in that country relate to each other. So everything that makes a country a country is left destroyed.

So neoliberal globalization wants to destroy the nations of the world so that only one Nation or country remains, the country of money, of capital. And capitalism wants everything to be as it desires, according to its own way, and it doesn't like what is different, and it persecutes it and attacks it, or shoves it into a corner and acts as if it doesn't exist.

Thus, in short, the capitalism of global neoliberalism is based on exploitation, plunder, contempt, and repression of those who refuse it. The same as before, but now globalized, worldwide.

But it is not so easy for neoliberal globalization, because the exploited of each country become discontented, and they do not say oh well, but rather they rebel. And those who are unnecessary and who are in the way resist, and they don't allow themselves to be eliminated. And that is why we see, all over the world, those who are being screwed over creating resistances, not letting it happen, in other words, they rebel, and not just in one country but wherever they abound. And so, just as there is a neoliberal globalization, there is a globalization of rebellion.

And it is not just the workers of the countryside and of the city who appear in this globalization of rebellion, but others appear who are persecuted and despised for the same reason, for not letting themselves be dominated, like women, young people, the indigenous, homosexuals, lesbians, transsexual persons, migrants, and many other groups who exist all over the world but

who we do not see until they shout enough of being despised, and they rise up, and then we see them, we hear them, and we learn from them.

And then we see that all those groups of people are fighting against neoliberalism, against the capitalist globalization plan, and they are struggling for humanity.

And we are astonished when we see the stupidity of the neoliberals who want to destroy all of humanity with their wars and exploitation, but it also makes us quite happy to see resistances and rebellions appearing everywhere, such as ours, which is a bit small, but here we are. And we see this all over the world, and now our heart learns that we are not alone.

IV. How We See Our Country Which is Mexico

Now we will talk to you about how we see what is going on in our Mexico. What we see is that our country is governed by neoliberals. So, as we already explained, our leaders are destroying our nation, our Mexican Patria. And the work of these bad leaders is not to look after the wellbeing of the people, instead they are only concerned with the well-being of the capitalists. For example, they make laws like the Free Trade Agreement, which end up leaving many Mexicans destitute, like campesinos and small farmers, because they are "gobbled up" by the big agro-industrial companies, as well as workers and small businesspeople, because they cannot compete with the large transnationals that come in without anybody saying anything to them or even thanking them, and they set their low salaries and their high prices. So some of the economic foundations of our Mexico, which were the countryside and industry and national commerce, are being destroyed, and just a bit of rubble remains, which they will surely sell off as well.

And these are great disgraces for our Patria. Because food is no longer being produced in our countryside, just what the big capitalists sell, and the good lands are being stolen through trickery and with the help of the politicians. What is happening in the countryside is the same as what happened under Porfirismo, but now, instead of hacendados [haciendo owners, like plantation owners], there are foreign businesses that have really screwed the campesino. And, where before there were credits and price protections, now there is just charity... and sometimes not even that.

As for the worker in the city, well the factories close and they are left without work, or these things called maquiladoras [factory workplaces, often in border zones] are opened, which are foreign and which pay a pittance for many hours of work. And then the price of the goods the people need doesn't even matter, because whether they're expensive or cheap, there is no pay anyway. And if someone was working in a small or midsize business, now they are not, because it has been closed and bought by a big transnational. And if someone had a small business, it disappeared as well, or they had to start doing clandestine work for big businesses which exploit them terribly, and which even put young children to work. And if the worker belonged to a union in order to demand his legal rights, well now that same union tells him he will have to put up with his salary being lowered or his hours or his benefits being taken away, because, if not, the business will close and move to another country. And then there is the "microchangarro" [small business] which is something like the government's economic program for putting all the city's workers on street corners selling gum or telephone cards. In other words, there is absolute economic destruction in the cities as well.

And then what happens is that, with the people's economy being totally screwed in the countryside as well as in the city, many Mexican men and women have to leave their Patria, Mexican

lands, and go to seek work in another country, the United States. And there they do not treat them well, but rather they exploit them, persecute them, treat them with contempt, and even kill them. Under neoliberalism which is imposed on us by the bad governments, the economy has not improved. On the contrary, the countryside is in great need, and there is no work in the cities. What is happening is that Mexico is being turned into a place where people are working for the wealth of foreigners, mostly rich gringos, a place you are just born into for a little while, and in another little while you die. That is why we say that Mexico is dominated by the United States.

And its not only that. Neoliberalism has also changed the Mexican political class, the politicians, making them into something like employees in a store who have to do everything possible to sell everything and to sell it very cheap.

You have already seen that they changed the laws in order to remove Article 27 from the Constitution so that ejidal and communal lands could be sold. That was Salinas de Gortari, and he and his gang said that it was for the good of the countryside and the campesino, and that was how they would prosper and live better. Has it been like that? The Mexican countryside is worse off than ever and the campesinos more screwed than under Porfirio Diaz. And they also say they are going to privatize—that is, sell to foreigners—the companies held by the State in order to help the well-being of the people, because the companies don't work well and they need to be modernized, and it's better to sell them off. But instead of things getting better, the social rights which were won in the revolution of 1910 are now cause for pity… and outrage. And they also said that the borders must be opened so that foreign capital can enter, and that way all the Mexican businesses will catch up and things will be better. But now we see that there aren't even national businesses, that foreigners ate them all up, and what they sell is worse than what Mexico made.

And now the Mexican politicians also want to sell PEMEX, the oil which belongs to all Mexicans, and the only difference is that some say it should be sold off completely and others that only a part of it should be sold. And they also want to privatize social security, and electricity and water and the forests and everything, until nothing of Mexico is left, and our country will be a wasteland or a place of entertainment for rich people from all over the world, and we Mexican men and women will be their servants, dependent on what they offer, living badly, without roots, without culture, without Patria.

So the neoliberals want to kill Mexico, our Mexican Patria. And the political parties not only do not defend it, they are the first to put themselves at the service of foreigners, especially those from the United States, and they are the ones who are in charge of deceiving us, making us look the other way while everything is sold, and they pocket the money. And that's all the political parties that exist right now, not just some of them. Think about whether anything has been done well, and you will see that no, it's nothing but theft and scams. And look how all the politicians always have their nice houses and their nice cars and their luxuries. And they still want us to thank them and to vote for them again. And it is obvious, as they say, that they are without shame. And they are without shame because they do not, in fact, have a Patria. All they have are bank accounts.

And we also see that drug trafficking and crime has been increasing. And sometimes we think that criminals are like they show them in songs or movies, and maybe some are like that, but not the real criminal bosses. The real bosses go around very well-dressed, they study outside the country, they are elegant, they do not go around hiding but rather eat in good restaurants and

appear in the papers, very pretty and well-dressed at their parties. They are, as they say, "good people", and some are even government officials, representatives, senators, secretaries of state, prosperous businessmen, police chiefs, generals.

Are we saying that politics serves no purpose? No, we are saying that THIS politics serves no purpose. It is useless because it does not take the people into account. It does not listen to them, it does not pay any attention to them, it just approaches them when there are elections. And they do not even come after votes anymore, the polls alone are enough to say who wins. And then it's all promises about they're going to do this and they're going to do that and then later goodbye, you don't see them again until they appear in the news for having stolen a lot of money and nothing is going to be done to them because the law — which those same politicians made — protects them.

Because that's another problem, the Constitution is all warped and changed now. It's no longer the one that had the rights and liberties of working people. Now it's about the rights and liberties of the neoliberals so they can have their huge profits. And the judges are there to serve those neoliberals, because they always rule in favor of them, and those who are not rich get injustice, jails, and cemeteries.

Well, even with all this mess the neoliberals are making, there are Mexican men and women who are organizing and making a struggle of resistance. And we discovered that there are indigenous, that their lands are far away from us here in Chiapas, and that they are creating their autonomy and defending their culture and caring for their land, forests, and water. And there are workers in the countryside, campesinos, who are organizing and holding marches and mobilizations in order to demand credits and aid for the countryside. And there are workers in the city who do not let their rights be taken away or their jobs privatized. They protest and demonstrate so the little they have isn't taken away from them and so that the country isn't robbed of what is its own, like electricity, oil, social security, and education. And there are students who don't let education be privatized and who are fighting for it to be free and public and scientific, that is, so it doesn't cost money to go, so that everyone can learn, and so they don't teach non-sense. And there are women who do not let themselves be treated as ornaments or be humiliated and despised just for being women, but who are organizing and fighting for the respect they deserve as the women they are. And there are young people who don't accept being brutalized with drugs or being persecuted for their way of being, but who make themselves aware with their music and their culture, their rebellion. And there are homosexuals, lesbians, transsexuals, those of other ways who do not put up with being ridiculed, despised, mistreated, and even killed for having another way which is different, or with being treated as abnormal or criminal, but who make their own organizations in order to defend their right to be different. And there are priests and nuns and those they call lay people who are not with the rich and who are not resigned to merely reciting prayers, but who are organizing to accompany the struggles of the people. And there are those who are called social activists, men and women who have been fighting all their lives for exploited people, and they are the same ones who participated in the great strikes and workers' actions, in the great citizens' mobilizations, in the great campesino movements, and who suffer great repression, and who, even though some are old now, continue on without surrendering. They go everywhere looking to organize, seeking justice, and they create leftist organizations, non-governmental organizations, human rights organizations, organizations in defense of political prisoners and for the disappeared, leftist publications, organizations of teachers or students,

social struggle, and even political-military organizations, and they are not quiet and they know so much because they have seen lived and struggled so much.

And so we see in general that in our country, which is called Mexico, there are many people who do not just put up with things, who don't give up, who don't sell out, that is, people with dignity. And that makes us very happy and content, because with all those people it's not going to be so easy for the neoliberals to win, and perhaps it will be possible to save our Patria from the great thefts and destruction they are carrying out. And we hope that our "we" includes all these rebellions…

V. What We Want To Do

Now we are now going to tell you what we want to do in the world and in Mexico, because we cannot see everything that is happening on our planet and remain quiet, as if only we are where we are.

We want is to tell all of those who are resisting and fighting all over the world in their own ways and in their own countries that you are not alone, that we, the zapatistas, though we are very small, support you and we are going to see how we can help you in your struggles and how speak to you in order to learn from you, because what we have learned, in fact, is to learn.

And we want to tell the Latin American peoples that we are proud to be a part of you, even if it is a small part. We remember quite well how the continent was illuminated some years ago, and there was a light that was called Che Guevara, just like before it was called Bolivar, because sometimes the people take up a name to show that they are taking up a flag.

And we want to tell the people of Cuba, who have now been on their path of resistance for many years, that you are not alone, and we do not agree with the blockade they are imposing, and we are going to see how to send you something, even if it is just maize, for your resistance. And we want to tell the North American people that we do not confuse things, we know that the bad governments you have and which spread harm throughout the world are one thing and that the North Americans who struggle in their country, and who are in solidarity with the struggles of other countries, are quite another. And we want to tell the Mapuche brothers and sisters in Chile that we are watching and learning from your struggles. And to the Venezuelans, we see how well you are defending your sovereignty, that is, your nation's right to decide where it is going. And to the indigenous brothers and sisters of Ecuador and Bolivia, we say you are giving a good history lesson to all of Latin America, because you are indeed putting a halt to neoliberal globalization. And to the piqueteros and to the young people of Argentina, we want to tell you this, that we love you. And to those in Uruguay who want a better country, we admire you. And to the landless in Brazil, we respect you. And to all the young people of Latin America, what you are doing is good, and you give us great hope.

And we want to tell the brothers and sisters of Social Europe, that which is dignified and rebellious, that you are not alone. That your great movements against the neoliberal wars bring us joy. That we are attentively watching your forms of organization and your methods of struggle so that we can perhaps learn something. That we are considering how we can help you in your struggles, though we are not going to send euros because they will be devalued because of that whole European Union mess. But perhaps we will send you crafts and coffee so that you can market them and that could help you some in the work of your struggle. And perhaps we might

also send you some pozol [corn and water drink], which provides much strength for the resistance, but who knows if we will actually send it to you because pozol is more our way and what if it were to hurt your bellies and weaken your struggles and allow the neoliberals to defeat you.

And we want to tell the brothers and sisters of Africa, Asia, and Oceania that we know that you are fighting also, and we want to learn more of your ideas and practices.

And we want to tell the world that we want to make you big, so big that all those worlds which are resisting will fit, because the neoliberals want to destroy them and because these worlds don't simply let them but keep fighting for humanity.

Now then, what we want to do in Mexico is to make an agreement with persons and organizations of the left, because we believe that it is on the political left where the idea of resisting neoliberal globalization really exists, as well as the idea of making a country where there will be justice, democracy, and liberty for everyone. Not like it is now, where there is justice only for the rich, where there is liberty only for their big businesses, and where there is democracy only for painting walls with election propaganda. And because we believe that only from the left can a plan of struggle emerge so that our Patria, which is Mexico, does not die.

And, then, what we think is that, with these persons and organizations of the left, we will make a plan for going to all those parts of Mexico where there are humble and simple people like ourselves.

And we are not going to tell them what they should do or give them orders.

Nor are we going to ask them to vote for a candidate, since we already know these are all neoliberals.

Nor are we going to tell them to be like us, nor to rise up in arms.

What we are going to do is to ask them what their lives are like, what their struggle is like, what their thoughts are about our country and what we should do so that we are not defeated.

What we are going to do is to take heed of the thoughts of the simple and humble people, and perhaps we will find there the same love that we feel for our Patria.

And perhaps we will find agreement between those of us who are simple and humble and, together, we will organize all over the country and reach agreement in our struggles, which are now each alone, separated from each other, and we will find something like a program that has what we all want, and a plan for how we are going to achieve the realization of that program, which is called the "national program of struggle."

And, with the agreement of the majority of those people to whom we are going to listen, we will then engage in a joint struggle together with everyone, with indigenous, workers, campesinos, students, teachers, employees, women, children, old ones, men, and with all those of good heart who want to struggle so that our Patria called Mexico, which is between the Rio Grande and the Rio Suchiate with the Pacific Ocean on one side and the Atlantic on the other, does not end up being destroyed and sold.

VI. How We Are Going To Do It

And so this is our simple word that goes out to the humble and simple people of Mexico and of the world, and we are calling our word today:

The Sixth Declaration of the Lacondón Jungle.

And we are here to say, with our simple word, that…

The EZLN maintains its commitment to an offensive ceasefire, and it will not make any attack against government forces or any offensive military movements.

The EZLN maintains its commitment to insisting on the path of political struggle with this peaceful initiative that we are now undertaking. The EZLN reaffirms, therefore, its resolve not to establish any kind of secret relations with national political-military organizations or with those from other countries.

The EZLN reaffirms its commitment to defend, support, and obey the zapatista indigenous communities of which it is composed, and which are its supreme command, and will — to the best of its abilities and without interfer-ing in their internal democratic processes — contribute to the strengthening of their autonomy, good government, and improvement in their living conditions. In other words, what we are going to do in Mexico and in the world we are going to do without arms, in a civil and peaceful movement, and without neglecting nor ceasing to support our communities.

Therefore…

In the World…

1. We will forge new relationships of mutual respect and support with persons and organizations that are resisting and struggling against neoliberalism and for humanity.

2. As far as we are able, we will send material aid such as food and handicrafts for those brothers and sisters who are struggling all over the world.
   In order to begin, we are going to ask the Good Government Council of La Realidad to loan their truck, which is called "Chompiras," and appears to hold about 8 tons, and we are going to fill it with corn and perhaps two 200 liter barrels of oil or petrol, whichever they prefer, and we are going to deliver it to the Cuban Embassy in Mexico for them to send to the Cuban people as aid from the zapatistas for their resistance against the North American blockade. Or perhaps there might be a closer place where it could be delivered, because it is long way to Mexico City and what if "Chompiras" were to break down and then we'd be in bad shape. We'll do this when the harvest comes in—the crops are growing right now in the fields—and if we aren't attacked, because if we were to send it during these next few months it would be nothing but young corncobs, and that wouldn't get there okay not even as tamales, better in November or December, depending.
   And we are also going to make an agreement with the women's crafts cooperatives in order to send a good bit of embroidered work to those Europeans who are perhaps not of the Union, and perhaps we'll also send some organic coffee from the zapatista cooperatives, so that they can sell it and make a little money for their struggle. And if it doesn't sell, they can always sit down and have a little cup of coffee and talk about the anti-neoliberal struggle, and if it's cold then they can cover themselves with the zapatista embroidery, which does in fact hold up quite well, even being laundered by hand and with rocks, and, besides, the colors don't run in the wash.
   And we are also going to send the indigenous brothers and sisters of Bolivia and Ecuador some corn that is not genetically modified, though we don't know exactly where to send it so it gets there okay, but we are willing to give this little bit of aid.

3. And to all of those who are resisting throughout the world, we say there must be more intercontinental encounters, even if just one more. Perhaps December of this year or next

January, we should think about it. We don't want to say when exactly, because everyone together and equally should decide on where, when, how, and who. But let's not do it with a stage where just a few speak and all the rest listen. Rather lets not have a stage, just a level field where everyone speaks, but in orderly fashion, otherwise it will just be a hubbub and the words won't be understood. But with good organization everyone will be able to hear and jot down in their notebooks the others' words of resistance, so then everyone can go home and talk with their compañeros and compañeras in their own worlds. And we think it should be in a place that has a very large jail, because what if they were to repress us and incarcerate us, that way we wouldn't be all piled up, prisoners, yes, but well organized, and there in the jail we could continue the intercontinental meetings for humanity and against neoliberalism. Later on we'll tell you what we could do in order to come to agreement on this. So that's how we're thinking of doing what we want to do in the world. Now follows…

In Mexico…

1. We are going to continue fighting for the Indian peoples of Mexico, but now not just for them and not only with them, but for all the exploited and dispossessed of Mexico, with all of them and all over the country. And when we say all the exploited of Mexico, we are also talking about the brothers and sisters who have had to go to the United States in search of work in order to survive.

2. We are going to go to listen to, and talk directly with, without intermediaries or mediation, the simple and humble of the Mexican people, and, according to what we hear and learn, we are going to go about building, together with those people who, like us, are humble and simple, a national program of struggle, but a program which will be clearly of the left, that is, anti-capitalist, anti-neoliberal, in other words for justice, democracy, and liberty for the Mexican people.

3. We are going to try to build, or rebuild, another way of doing politics, one which once again has the spirit of serving others, without material interests, through sacrifice, dedication, honesty, keeping one's word, and which has as its only payment the satisfaction of duty fulfilled, as it was before with leftist militants who were not stopped by blows, jail, or death, let alone by dollar bills.

4. We are also going to go about generating a struggle in order to demand that we make a new Constitution, new laws which take into account the demands of the Mexican people, which are: housing, land, work, food, health, education, information, culture, independence, democracy, justice, liberty and peace. A new Constitution which recognizes the rights and liberties of the people, and which defends the weak in the face of the powerful.

TO THESE ENDS…

The EZLN will send a delegation of its leadership in order to do this work throughout the national territory and for an indefinite period of time. This zapatista delegation, along with those organizations and persons of the left who join with this Sixth Declaration of the Lacondón Jungle, will go to those places where we are expressly invited.

We are also letting you know that the EZLN will establish a policy of alliances with non-electoral organizations and movements which define themselves, in theory and practice, as being of the left, in accordance with the following conditions:

No to agreements made above to be imposed below, but to make accords to go together to listen and to organize outrage; not to generate movements which are later negotiated behind the backs of those who made them, but to always take into account the opinions of those participating; not to seek gifts, positions, advantages, public offices, from Power or those who aspire to it, but to go beyond the election calendar; not to try to resolve from above the problems of our Nation, but to build FROM BELOW AND FOR BELOW an alternative to neoliberal destruction, a leftist alternative for Mexico.

Yes to reciprocal respect for the autonomy and independence of organizations, their forms of struggle, their ways of organizing, for their internal decision making processes, for legitimate representatives, aspirations, and demands; yes to a clear commitment for joint and coordinated defense of national sovereignty, with intransigent opposition to the privatization attempts of electricity, oil, water, and natural resources.

In other words, we are inviting the unregistered political and social organizations of the left, and those persons who lay claim to the left and who do not belong to registered political parties, to meet with us at the time, place and manner which we will propose at the appropriate time, to organize a national campaign, visiting all possible corners of our Patria in order to listen to and organize the word of our people. So it is like a campaign, but a very otherly campaign, because it is not electoral.

Brothers and sisters:

This is our word which we declare:

In the world, we are going to link ourselves more closely with the resistance struggles against neoliberalism and for humanity.

And we are going to support, even if it's just a little, those struggles.

And we are going to exchange, with mutual respect, experiences, histories, ideas, dreams.

In Mexico, we are going to travel all over the country, through the ruins left by the neoliberal wars and through those resistances which, there entrenched, are flourishing in those ruins.

We are going to seek, and to find, those who love these lands and these skies as much as we do.

We are going to seek, from La Realidad to Tijuana, those who want to organize, to struggle, and to build what may perhaps be the last hope this Nation — which has existed at least since the time when an eagle alighted on a cactus in order to devour a snake — has of not dying.

We are going for democracy, liberty, and justice for those of us who have been denied it.

We are going with another politics, for a program of the left and for a new Constitution.

We invite the indigenous, workers, campesinos, teachers, students, housewives, neighbors, small businesspersons, small shop owners, micro-businesspersons, retired people, disabled persons, religious men and women, scientists, artists, intellectuals, young persons, women, old persons, homosexuals and lesbians, boys and girls, to participate, whether individually or collectively, directly with the zapatistas in this NATIONAL CAMPAIGN for building another way of doing politics, for a national program of struggle of the left, and for a new Constitution.

And so this is our word as to what we are going to do and how we are going to do it. It's up to you all to see whether you want to join.

And we are telling those men and women who have good thinking in their hearts, who are in agreement with this word we present and who are not afraid, or who are afraid but are controlling it, to state publicly whether they are in agreement with this idea we are presenting, and in that way we will see clearly who and how and where and when this new step in the struggle is to be made.

While you are thinking about it, we say to you that today, in the sixth month of the year 2005, the men, women, children, and old ones of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation have decided to subscribe to this Sixth Declaration of the Lacandón Jungle. And those who know how to sign, signed, and those who don't left their finger-print, though there are fewer now who do not know how because our education has advanced here in this territory in rebellion, for humanity and against neoliberalism, that is in zapatista lands and skies.

And this was our simple word sent out to the noble hearts of those simple and humble people who resist and rebel against injustices all over the world.

Democracy!

Liberty!

Justice!

From the mountains of the Mexican Southeast.

Clandestine Revolutionary Indigenous Committee — General Command of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation.

Mexico, in the sixth month, or June, of the year 2005.

El Kilombo Intergaláctico
Beyond Resistance: Everything
An Interview with Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos
2007