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February 22, 2003

Retrieved on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2021 from [www.counterpunch.org](http://www.counterpunch.org)  
(Communique from the EZLN which was read during the demonstration in Rome, Italy, on February 15, 2003. It was read by Heidi Giuliani, the mother of activist Carlo, who was assassinated by the Italian police in Genoa in July of 2001.)  
Translated by Scott Handleman.

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# Say No to the War of Fear

Subcomandante Marcos

February 22, 2003

Brothers and Sisters of Rebel Italy:

Greetings from the men, women, children and old ones of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation. Our word is made cloud in order to cross the ocean and to reach the worlds which are in your hearts.

We know that today demonstrations are being held throughout the world in order to say “No” to Bush’s war against the people of Iraq.

And it must be said like that, because it is not a war by the North American people, nor is it a war against Saddam Hussein.

It is a war by money, which is represented by Senor Bush (perhaps in order to emphasize that he is completely lacking in intelligence). And it is against humanity, whose fate is now at stake on the soil of Iraq.

This is the war of fear.

Its objective is not to defeat Hussein in Iraq. Its goal is not to do away with Al Qaeda. Nor does it seek to liberate the people of Iraq. It is not justice, nor democracy, nor liberty which drives this terror. It is fear.

Fear that the entire world will refuse to accept a policeman which tells it what it should do, how it should do it and when it should do it. It is fear.

Fear that the world will refuse to be treated like plunder.

Fear of that human essence which is called rebellion.

Fear that the millions of human beings who are mobilizing today throughout the world will be victorious in raising the cause of peace.

Because the victims of those bombs which will be launched over Iraqi lands will not only be Iraqi civilians, children, women, men and old ones, whose deaths will be merely an accident in the headlong, arbitrary path of he who, from his side, calls on God as an alibi for destruction and death.

The person leading this stupidity (which is supported by Berlusconi in Italy, Blair in England and Aznar in Spain), Senor Bush, used money to buy that power which he is trying to hurl upon the people of Iraq.

Because it must not be forgotten that Senor Bush is the head of the self-proclaimed world police, thanks to a fraud which was so immense that it could only be covered up by the shadows of the twin towers in New York, and by the blood of the victims of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

Neither Hussein nor the Iraqi people matter to the North American government. What matters to it is demonstrating that it can commit its crimes in any part of the world, at any moment, and that it can do so with absolute impunity.

The bombs which are to fall in Iraq seek also to fall on all the nations of earth. They would also fall on our hearts, and thus universalize that fear which they carry within.

This war is against all humanity, against all honest men and women.

This war seeks that we should know fear, that we should believe that he who has money and military force also has right.

This war hopes that we shall shrug our shoulders, that we shall make cynicism a new religion, that we shall remain silent, that we shall conform, that we shall resign, that we shall surrender...that we shall forget...

That we shall forget Carlo Giuliani, the rebel of Genoa.

For the zapatistas, we are the men who dream our dead. And today our dead are dreaming a rebel "NO."

For us there is but one dignified word and one conscientious action in the face of this war. The word "NO" and the rebel action.

That is why we must say "NO" to war.

A "NO" without conditions or excuses.

A "NO" without half measures.

A "NO" untarnished by gray areas.

A "NO" with all the colors which paint the world.

A "NO" which is clear, categorical, resounding, definitive, world-wide.

What is at stake in this war is the relationship between the powerful and the weak. The powerful is powerful because he makes us weak. He lives off our work, off our blood. That is how he grows fat while we languish.

The powerful have invoked God at their side in this war, so that we will accept their power and our weakness as something that has been established by divine plan.

But there is no god behind this war other than the god of money, nor any right other than the desire for death and destruction.

The only strength of the weak is their dignity. That is what inspires them to fight in order to resist the powerful, in order to rebel.

Today there is a "NO" which shall weaken the powerful and strengthen the weak: the "NO" to war.

Some might ask whether the word which has convened so many throughout the world will be capable of preventing the war or, once it has begun, of stopping it.

But the question is not whether we can change the murderous march of the powerful. No. The question we should be asking is:

could we live with the shame of not having done everything possible to prevent and stop this war?

No honest man or woman can remain silent and indifferent at this moment.

All of us, each one in our own voice, in our own way, in our own language, by our own action, must say "NO."

And, if the powerful wish to universalize fear through death and destruction, we must universalize the "NO."

Because the "NO" to this war is also a "NO" to fear, a "NO" to resignation, a "NO" to surrender, a "NO" to the forgetting, a "NO" to renouncing our humanness.

It is a "NO" for humanity and against neoliberalism.

We would hope that this "NO" would transcend borders, that it would sneak past customs, that it would overcome differences of language and culture, and that it would unite the honest and noble part of humanity, which is also, and it must not be forgotten, the majority.

Because there are negations which unite and dignify.

Because there are negations which affirm men and women in the best of themselves, that is, in their dignity.

Today the skies of the world are clouded over with warplanes, with missiles – which call themselves "intelligent" merely so that they can conceal the stupidity of those who are in charge of them, and those who, like Berlusconi, Blair and Aznar, justify them – with satellites which point out where there is life and where there will be death.

And the land of the earth is tarnished with machines of war which would paint the earth with blood and shame.

The storm comes.

But dawn shall come only if the words made cloud in order to cross borders is turned into a "NO" made stone, and they make an opening in the darkness, a crevice through which tomorrow can slip.

Brothers and sisters of rebel and dignified Italy:

Please accept this "NO" which we, the zapatistas, the smallest, are sending you.

Allow our "NO" to unite with yours and with all the "NO's" which are flourishing today throughout the earth.

Viva the rebellion which says "NO!"

Death to death!

From the mountains of the Mexican Southeast.

By the Comandancia General of the Clandestine Revolutionary Indigenous Committee of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation.

Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos.