

*Zapatista Messages (August 2019)*

EZLN

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# THE OPENING ACT

August of 2019

## ZAPATISTA ARMY FOR NATIONAL LIBERATION MEXICO

**Testing, testing...**

**One... two... testing...**

**Testing one two three... testing...**

***“¿Hello, hello, hello, how low?”***

From the... wait a minute! Did the Sup just quote the Nirvana track “*Smells Like Teen Spirit*”? What’s he trying to do, address a particular generation Or is he talking to those who regret having promoted what now plagues them? Or is he suggesting that this was Kurt Cobain’s version of the Joker’s “*Why so serious?*” Or maybe it’s self-criticism because of that “*I’m worse at what I do best*” thing? A subliminal message for CompArte?

Hmm... Maybe it has something to do with SKA. What? Ska wasn't around then? Country Rock and Roll? *El Piporro* with images from that classic of interstellar filmography, *The Ship of Monsters*?<sup>1</sup> Hmm...an unconscious reference to *Puy Ta Cuxlejaltic*?<sup>2</sup> Or a greeting that challenges the wall which the federal government intends to erect on the Mexican Isthmus in order to separate us from the peoples of the north? Nah, must be something else.

For sure, Alakazam the Great<sup>3</sup>:

*Look, ladies, gentlemen, and others Nothing to see here, nothing to see there, but wait, all of a sudden, boom:*

### **The Zapatista communities (re)appear...**

(To be continued...)

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<sup>1</sup>“El Piporro” was the nickname of Eulalio «Lalo» González Ramírez (1921–2003), a Mexican actor, comic, musician, songwriter, screenwriter, and film director who starred in *La nave de los monstruos* (The Ship of Monsters), a 1960 Mexican comic science fiction film. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Ship\\_of\\_Monsters](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Ship_of_Monsters):

<sup>2</sup>The name given to the Zapatista film festival held in November 2018, meaning “Caracol of our Life.” *Caracol* is literally conch shell or a spiral, but also the name for the five seats of Zapatista self-government.

<sup>3</sup>1960 Japanese musical anime film, based on the Chinese novel *Journey to the West*. See the plot line at: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alakazam\\_the\\_Great](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alakazam_the_Great):

THE OPENING ACT

From the mountains of the Mexican Southeast  
El SupGaleano,  
Performing as opening act for Subcomandante  
Insurgente Moisés, while he drives (SupGaleano that is)  
*fast and furious* down the highway to hell, and “*for this gift I  
feel blessed...*”<sup>4</sup>

Mexico, August of 2019

Videos:

- Nirvana – Smells Like Teen Spirit:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hTWKbfoikeg>
- Eulalio ‘Lalo’ González «El Piporro» – Ojos De  
Pancha:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PTrdjzFpJRM>
- AC/DC – Highway to Hell:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dd68IyqoUIU>

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<sup>4</sup>Lyrics from “Smells like Teen Spirit”: “*I’m worse at what I do best,  
And for this gift I feel blessed...*”

## THE OVERTURE: REALITY AS ENEMY

*If our epoch thinks this way,” the world says to itself, “who is (no)one to say otherwise”? Who are the politicians to do so if they should obey us? Who are the judges to do so if their decisions are obligated to reflect and please us? Who are the journalists and essayists to do so if their opinions should meld with our own? Who are the thinkers to do so...given that they aren't even necessary to us? Who are the law makers to say otherwise if they are supposed to establish laws following our dictates?*

Javier Marias, “When Society Is The Tyrant.” (from *El País Semanal*, May 13, 2018)

I don't know if citing Javier Marías (whose novels *A Heart So White* and *Tomorrow In The Battle Think on Me* eased the sleeplessness of the now deceased SubMarcos during the nights after the betrayal which took place in February of 1995) makes me part of the conservatives' and neoliberals' “mafia of power.” I mean, I bring this up given the fact that Javier Marias has worked with the Spanish newspaper *El País* and that he tends to sharply question the evidence when others tend to swallow it hook, line, and sinker

without so much as a whimper and that he's intelligent and can't (nor do I think that he wants to) hide it. In addition, let's not forget that that he's a monarchist because he is king, Xavier I, of the Kingdom of Redonda and a member of the Royal Academy of Spain. All of these reasons are more than enough reason to tag him as a "conservative/neoliberal/enemy of the people and its vanguard which is marching inexorably to the fulfillment of all history," by the new thought police that we now suffer.

As I'm sure you all know by now, I care a lot about "what people say" about me because I have a reputation to protect. Given this concern I had to think carefully and in all seriousness about this citation...for all of a fraction of a second. At that moment I saw hashtags, trending topics, likes and dislikes, facebook rants, whatsapps, instagrams, morning press conferences, and opinion columns all flash before my eyes filled with condemnations and damning tags.

In my defense, I thought I could mention the fact that along with the Javier Marías books that the now deceased SubMarcos carried during those dark days, you could also find books by Manuel Vazquez Montalbán as well as Miguel Hernandez's *Expert in Moons*. I thought I could also bring up the fact that Javier Marías is a fan of (or was a fan of—support for a football team is like love—it's

eternal, until it ends) Real Madrid, that Manuel Vázquez Montalbán is a fan of Barcelona, that Mario Benedetti is a fan of Nacional from Montevideo, Almuneda Grandes supports Atlético Madrid, Juan Villoro backs Necaxa and that I, in contrast, with my provincial chauvinism which is all the rage, support Jaguares from Chiapas.

(*N.B.!* Instead of using Baseball, the sport that has become the official sport and the sport of officialdom, I prefer to use soccer as my referent. So, make sure to add these additional sins onto my sentence.)

I imagine that with a backpack packed with these “weapons”—it’s also rumored that the backpack contained a bilingual edition of Shakespeare’s *Sonnets*, the two volumes of *The Ingenious Hidalgo, Don Quijote de La Mancha*, and an absurd French-Spanish-French dictionary—the deceased SubMarcos must have envied Guy Montag to no end for having found a library filled with texts that had been bound in the brains of the outlaws found in Ray Bradbury’s 1953 *Fahrenheit 451*. It must have been SubMarcos’ wet dream to command a human library instead of troops: “Attention! This is the battle plan: First, Joyce and Beckett will sow bewilderment and confusion among the enemy ranks; next, Saramago, Neruda, and Gelman will flank the enemy to their left and Vargas Llosa, Paz, and Solzhenistyn will do the same but to their right. At the same time García Lorca, Wilde, Sor Juana, and Woolf will flip their positions, and the rest will move as a single block. Ok, you should already know this but, if there’s a lot of them we’ll run, if there’s few of them we’ll



hide, but if there's no one there then forward! We were all born to die! Ok, any questions, doubts, anxieties, anger, fuck you? No! Dylan, you're on the tambourine!"

One time I ask the now deceased SubMarcos if he actually read all that stuff that he was carrying. He told me he didn't, that he carried it so that if they killed him his executioners would at least have something they could entertain themselves during the time it took him to finally die. Yes, I know, SubMarcos' dark humor wasn't well received...well, it wasn't just his dark humor that wasn't liked.

In sum, as I was saying, I was doubting whether I should cite Javier Marías instead of Lenin, the two Marxes (Karl and Groucho), Malatesta, Trotsky, Mao, or that Manual of Historic(al) Material(ism)—Polyester. I weighed all the pros and cons of doing so and since I found no pros and so many cons I decided I would definitely have to cite him so that in that way I could add to my already immense popularity among the intellectuals of the Fourth Transformation [IV T]. I should make clear that Javier Marías is entirely innocent in this assault against political correctness due to the simple fact I've never spoken to him. I hope that if he finds out about this that he'll have the generosity to simply, as they say over there [in Spain], "look past me" with the same face that one would look at the passing of an untimely insect—an insect that might very well be a beetle.

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If modernity consists of the fact that, instead of throwing stones at what people don't understand (which is what makes that thing "different") now they use tweets and dislikes, well then, the world must be making progress. From stoning into the bonfire, from there to the gallows. Next, up against the firing squad, followed shortly thereafter by exile and the pogroms. After that, concentration camps and strategic hamlets. Closer to home, the walls, the border patrol, "votre papiers, s'il vous plait."

Social Media simply isn't enough to "purify" the newly enthroned Aryan race: ignorance. The system also requires the violence of the state institutions in order to "complete" its raids. I don't know if the aversion to what is different was already in the DNA of the founding Big Bang of the Universe, but ignorance has always persecuted and attacked knowledge and what makes it possible: intelligence.

If the dark ages used to move at the pace of carts and galleons, today it travels in yottabytes (a yottabyte=a 1 followed by 24 zeros of bytes) and the speed of light. We might even say that social media has the government that it deserves. But even there on social media there are those who resist and rebel. There's always someone who doesn't follow the pied piper of the latest trending topic and who instead decides to reflect, to analyze, to doubt, to question. It's a tiny minority that's been cornered and swept away by "influencers" and other such cretins who have discovered that stupidity can also get you fame and social recognition. Still, the very potential of social me-

dia is also its limit: the fleeting is what leads attention by the nose and pressing pause isn't a possibility if one is to stay up on the latest. The worst enemy of a scandal is the next scandal that follows it almost instantaneously. Traditional media is dragged back and forth by this virtual drunkenness. Almost the entirety of the printed press does nothing but try to recycle what's already trending on social media, but no matter how much effort they make they're always bringing up the rear. A press that can fill this vacuum by investigating, by eliciting reflection, by feeding intelligence and giving wind to the sails of knowledge has yet to be seen.

In the way it sees fit, and with an enormous technological apparatus at its disposal, the system fights off reality in the most effective way possible, by creating another reality and drawing all the attention and energy of the people-people toward this alternate reality. For example, you look upon and evaluate governments, whether positively or negatively, not by referring to their acts, their decisions, their capacity to respond to unforeseen circumstances, but rather by pointing to their virtual popularity. In this way, bad governments can triumph on these "darned" social media while real reality insists on marching us all toward the abyss. Virtual reality clothes the naked emperor in modesty; the tyrant is presented as a democrat; the reactionary as transformational; the imbecile as intelligent; and the ignorant as a sage.

But that's not it. The system has also rediscovered that hunting down those who are different will provide

you with followers and therefore the utterances and judgements of characters like Trump, Bolsonaro, Macri, Moreno, López Obrador, Ortega, Piñera, Putin, Macron, Merkel, Tsipras, Johnson and \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank) provoked howls of approval on social media. That's how judgments and sentence are passed down today that are much more than just words and that should scandalize anyone with even a minimum of decency. The *migra* [in both the U.S. and Mexico], the minutemen in the U.S., and the National Guard [Mexico's] enforce the sentence that has been passed against migrants, while the "left radicals, that in my eyes are nothing but conservatives" (*dixit* López Obrador) are forewarned by the hitmen that shot Samir Flores Soberanes. Meanwhile the washing of hands continues unabated, Trump will condemn the massacre in El Paso and López Obrador will say, while he's in talks with big business, that he'll investigate Samir's assassination.

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We're not going to offend anyone by insisting that we told you so (but...we did tell you so).

The serpent, now free of its shell, stretches out and rejoices. It celebrates and applauds itself while slowly, ever so slowly, the constrictive embrace of one-dimensional thought does its work. No one should oppose the powerful! No one should defy his omnipotence over the press, social media, or the academy. No one should oppose his

disdain for the arts, for science, no one should call out his corrupt financial practices, his benedictions and damnations from the pulpit—a pulpit built upon a foundation of lies, simulations, threats already delivered upon, and the attacks (virtual and real) by those maroon shirts that slowly begin to turn brown. No one should dare to recognize reality as their referent and therefore look beyond the angry and tedious sermons and diatribes of the one who appears alone, and only, on stage.

Awww, we know, so much confusion! Up there they say that everything is fine and here below we tell you everything is fucked and it's going to get worse. But for now, all critical thought, all scientific analysis, and all art that reveals and rebels, has in front of them not reality but a tag that labels them “right wing,” “conservative,” “reactionary,” or “fifi” or whatever might come to the lips of the inquisitor-in-chief and overseer that's charged with dishing out damnations and condemnations on this plantation we now suffer.

And by the way you're right, the comic tantrums thrown by Felipe Calderon, by Vicente Fox, by a rancid PAN, by a PRI that survives only by bribing the coroner into setting back the time of death, by a PRD that will some way have to demonstrate that it still exists, and by those “thinkers” that accompany all of these, seem to have been created by the ruling party itself because all they are able to accomplish is:

- They provide material that can easily be refuted

- even by someone who seems totally lost.
- This serves to perfunctorily disqualify any criticism or observation that might actually be based in rigorous research and analysis. Which also means that any criticism, that might not even come from the left but from progressive sectors or liberal democrats, starts to sound like another brick in the wall of a plot or “soft coup” (the latest fashionable hoax) behind which the supreme leader can hide indefinitely.

Naturally, you would expect a bit of seriousness, more analysis and less sloganeering from each side. But there isn't any seriousness nor analysis and there won't be any either. The sectors of the right that are fighting it out, and that have reduced the left and the progressive sectors to mere spectators, are at war. Some are at war so that they can stay in Power (or at least in what they think is Power) and others so that they can return to that same privileged location, so that they can return to the pulpit from which they might once again reign.

But who can I believe?

That's right: nobody.

Not even reality?

Look, listen, feel, smell, speak, and suffer your reality because, yes, we know that it's raining everywhere and on everyone. Maybe some are just barely starting to feel the first cold drops beating down on their body. But for others, and not only for indigenous peoples, this rain

today is coming down after another rain, after another, after another; dispossession, theft, threats, persecution, jail, disappearance, rapes, poundings, death...and yes, sometimes even charity.

Can we make a list of those it's raining on? That would be difficult but a first attempt might look like this:

- The family of the imprisoned, the murdered, the disappeared who are searching for truth and justice and an answer to that question for which there will never be a reply: "Why!?" That great absurd chaos that today distributed absence just because, because of statistical probability, like the lottery. If death can be terrible, not knowing what happened or why it happened is simply outside of all human logic and yet it's a level of cruelty that could only be the result of the machinations of the human mind.
- Others, who have finally found equality with women of all ages, children, the elderly, men, all of them assassinated and disappeared. Death and that incredibly cruel limbo of disappearance finally creating equality across genders, races, and colors.
- Women, always women, beaten, raped, disappeared, murdered.
- Peoples under invasion by the most absurd megaprojects, humiliated by the same hand-outs as always under a different name but with the same requirements as before: Lower your head! Obey! Kneel! Humiliate yourself! Give up! Disappear! In addi-

tion to that weapon wielded by that “progressive” hitman who killed Samir Flores believing that by killing him he would die, that by killing him, they would kill his cause.

- Journalists censured by threats, blackmail, harassment (virtual and real), disappearance, jail, murder.
- Workers from countryside and the city, weighed down with work until yesterday, today or any day, unemployed and indebted.
- Doctors and nurses who have to ask their patients to bring their own gauze, their own needle, their own bandage, their own medicine, “because there’s nothing and all I can tell you is what’s going to kill you which at this point is already a lot given the situation. But look, let me give you a list of the promises that the government has made. That’s right, in the meantime I would recommend that you wait to get sick until next year and maybe then...”
- Organizations, groups, and political and social collectives on the left that are faced with the choice: surrender or be persecuted.
- Any random person who has been assaulted, extorted, kidnapped, disappeared, murdered, or dispossessed of that which they earned through their work, or who have been robbed of freedom and of their life.
- Scientists with no funding, Artists and other creators with no place to work, Intellectuals who sin



by just thinking (“Oh come on man! Thinking isn’t a sin, it’s just saying what you think that’s the sin, get it straight.”). Everything is neoliberal and”fifi” until the proper accreditation from Power has been verified in the morning press conferences that are meant to kill news columns, analysis, reports, research, knowledge, and intelligence.

- Migrants that are after the American Dream and yet only find Mexican nightmares wearing the badges of the Mexican National Guard that looks for legitimacy by proving that that cruelty against that which is different can also have citizenship in that place where the stamp depicts an eagle devouring a serpent.

If you are not on this list and you don’t have any family, friends or acquaintances who might fit into one of the categories on this list then I have no idea what you’re doing reading this. Oh! Maybe you got here because of google! Oh, Google and Youtube, “How unsearchable are your judgments and how inscrutable are your ways” (Romans 11:33.) Yes, I googled it, I couldn’t help myself and anyway today it’s all the rage to cite the Bible willy nilly.

You’re still here? Ok, but it’s on you. I’m warning you that you’ll have to read and reading my friends is like making love—there’s lots of positions, ways, calendars, geographies, technics, and technologies. But even so we’ll always be lacking a Kama Sutra for reading.

Are you ready? Grab a coffee? A soda? A water? Some

tobacco? Some legal or illegal substance? Here we go...

But first, let's use a little imagination. Let's take a look at one possible reality. After all, thanks to science (which today btw has been displaced by the frivolity of the pseudo-sciences, by a clean shaven esotericism, by new age and its holistic rear end summed up in a note, "Looking to trade my laboratory for a yoga studio!" and by the "like" button as a criterion of truth) we know that fiction is but another feasible reality.

Ok, tell me, the rain that's about to fall, will it be hard? How hard? Have you ever seen the rain comin' down on a sunny day?

(To be continued...)

From the mountains of the Mexican Southeast  
The SupGaleano  
(Practicing my Ommmm so I can apply for funding from  
Conacyt<sup>5</sup>)

Mexico, August of 2019

From the Notebooks of the Cat-Dog:

- The tyrant abhors intelligence. Not only because intelligence questions and defies them but also above all else because they don't have it. Since

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<sup>5</sup>Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología, or National Council on Science and Technology.

intelligence remains unreachable for the tyrant, they prohibit it and persecute it. Fear the boss who is agile and sly but doubly fear the boss who is ignorant because ignorance dehumanizes through consensus and ends up enslaving us. And more times than not naïve hope is nothing other than a well-dressed ignorance.

- Ignorance will always have more followers than intelligence and knowledge. Not only because ignorance is just easier but also because ignorance never goes out of style and is always popular and therefore attractive.
- Ignorance is more profitable than intelligence and knowledge and also cheaper.
- Ignorance is the mother of cowardice, betrayal, and forgetfulness.
- The tyrant always sows and grows ignorance. The ignorant will always need a pastor to lead them. The tyrant will always need a flock to follow them.
- Intelligence is the fruit of growth through knowledge and its thirst can never be quenched even when it is watered by other sources.
- With knowledge, intelligence discovers that the tyrant is not only unnecessary but also has an expiration date, which is the same date as the exhaustion of the patience of the slave.
- Intelligence does not die, it does not surrender. Perhaps at times it hides and waits for the right moment to become a shield and a weapon. In

the Zapatista communities of the mountains of the Mexican Southeast, intelligence transformed into knowledge is also referred to as “dignity.”

I bear witness.

The Undocumented Cat-Dog  
Rrruff-meow (or is it the reverse?)

Mexico, August of 2019, The rain begins to fall.

Videos:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oGuHw931JpA>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d6DmPQJRpns>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ow2DKVYEP3s>

## ADAGIO-ALLEGRO MOLTO IN E MINOR: A POSSIBLE REALITY

*As you know, madness is like gravity...all it takes is a little push.*

The Joker in the role of Heath Ledger (or was it the reverse?)

From the Notebook of the Cat-Dog:

Nobody knows for sure how it all started. Not even the *Tercios Compas* [Zapatista media], who took up the task of reconstructing the sequence of events, could pinpoint the exact moment and event in which the story I'm about to tell you began.

According to one version, SubGaleano is responsible for everything. Others say SubGaleano only started it and it was Subcomandante Insurgente Moisés who took it to completion.

See, what happened was that in one of his texts, Sub-Galeano mentioned a February 2011 program in which the journalist Carmen Aristegui asked if then-president Felipe Calderón Hinojosa was an alcoholic, and added that the nation should be informed about the health of the president. She was fired in retaliation. Up to that point in

the story there is no disagreement—and you can confirm that’s what happened by referring to news articles from that time.

The problem really begins when SubGaleano added something like, *“Madness, as pointed out by a misunderstood sage of the human soul, is like gravity: all it takes is a little push. To hold Power unlawfully is just that irresistible push that all those above long for, and it begins with three simple words, “I rule here.” If you think anyone in the media is going to question whether the current president is lacking in any of his mental faculties (let’s be clear, he didn’t say “crazy”), don’t hold your breath, because nobody will dare to do so.”*

The next day, in the quasi-divine light that is that likely lunatic’s morning press conference,<sup>6</sup> someone from the press dared to ask what he thought of the above comments. He remained silent, although his face contorted in anger and he ended the press conference on the spot without explaining how exactly obeying Donald Trump’s orders benefited the country, or which country he was referring to when he said it would benefit it. According to the president’s Communications Director, the boss (that’s what he called him) wasn’t feeling well due to a bit of a stomachache, likely the result of something he ate. The next morning, apparently feeling better, the boss supreme (that’s how the Communications Director referred to him) said that in his opinion, those who presented themselves as the radical left were merely rightwing radicals who hid

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<sup>6</sup>A reference to Andrés Manuel López Obrador’s morning press conferences that have become emblematic of his administration.

behind ski-masks and whose movement was limited to four municipalities in the southeastern Mexican state of Chiapas. And that even that was only thanks to the economic support it got from the Illuminati. He also said that “Marcos” (that’s what he said) was actually in France. Paris, to be exact, according to official information.

SubGaleano responded with a text describing the Plaza *Pigalle* with a level of detail that not even the Michelin Guide could match, noting the paradox of the existence of carnal sin in such proximity to the *Sacré-Cœur* that crowns *Montmartre*, and apologized for not being able to offer more information given that he was working in the “oldest profession in the book” (that’s how he put it) and had to attend to clients. Some even say that the Sup attached a photo showing off his shapely and well-toned legs. The 4T’s<sup>7</sup> social media networks alleged that the image was photoshopped and the “sockhead” (that’s what they called him) wasn’t really that hot—although more than a few of them saved the image to a folder titled “Do not open even in case of my death.”

At the next morning’s press conference, the supreme leader attempted a modest self-criticism. He corrected himself by claiming that according to official information, the Sup was not actually in Paris but rather in Greece—Lesbos Island, to be precise. SubGaleano responded

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<sup>7</sup>AMLO has deemed his own governing project the “Fourth Transformation,” supposedly on par with historic events such as Mexican Independence (1810), a period of reform in the mid-19th century, and the Mexican Revolution (1910).

with another text describing the conditions there for undocumented migrants traveling to Europe, fleeing the wars fed by European governments.

The next day brought yet another correction in the morning press conference: “the Subcomedian” (said the president) was actually, according to official information, in Australia. Lady Bay Beach in Sydney, to be precise. The Sup answered with a cheesy poem supposedly of his own authorship, one line of which read: *the shadow diluted by the sea/ as if to die by light/ sleeplessness distant and moist/present, a dry hope...* and a photo which common decency prevents me from describing. I can only tell you that the Sup had on his ski-mask, his cap, his pipe and that’s it (you get what I’m saying? I’m sure you do.)

The supreme leader exploded and that very afternoon tweeted that his patience (that of the supreme leader) was running out and he had everything ready to go implement the rule of law in “Chapas” (that’s how he wrote it) and put an end once and for all to the boasting by that “yarn-head” (that’s the term he used). NOTIMEX<sup>8</sup> corrected it to “in Chiapas” and in the social networks somebody timidly tweeted, “Uh, wasn’t he supposed to be in France-Greece-Australia?”

In the morning press conference, the “enlightened” one pulled out all the stops, declaring that he, the true leader, had the sacred mission of protecting the unstop-

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<sup>8</sup>This and following comments mentioning NOTIMEX are aimed at the news agency’s new director appointed by López Obrador, Sanjuana Martínez.



pable path of the 4T and that “all options to this end are on my nightstand.” NOTIMEX corrected the transcription to read “on my office desk.”

That’s where Subcomandante Insurgente Moisés intervened, writing a brief communique that said: *“You all are just another brick in the wall. We are one of many sledgehammers.”*

The supreme boss, maximum leader, so long-awaited by all of us (he said “*nosotros*” in the press conference but NOTIMEX later added “and *nosotras*”) declared that he would not hesitate to instill order in his republic (NOTIMEX corrected it to “*our* republic”).

Subcomandante Insurgente Moisés responded saying, *“You all are merely spittle in the sea of history. We are the sea of our dreams. All you are is dust in the wind. Ik O’tik (We are the wind).”*

Everyone agrees that this is what set everything off. The supreme leader may be somewhat tolerant, but questioning his role in the History (capitalized) of the world was a step too far...

## The LUE Law

Congress, in which the 4T held an overwhelming majority behind which the PVEM, the PAN, the PRI, and other mini-parties had lined up with patriotic fervor, gave fast track approval to the Law of Undesired Existence (LUE). Although the president had sent them the proposal just minutes before, the legislature understood immediately

the juridical genius of the LUE—a light in the darkness, a beacon that would guide the country (it was never clarified which country) to a bright future. Ergo, they approved it by acclamation.

One section of the bill, as a logical consequence of the law that made it illegal for anyone to earn more than the president, made it illegal for anyone being more intelligent than the president. Anyone with an IQ higher than the beloved leader would be jailed or exiled from the country (what country the LUE referred to was never clarified). IQ tests were declared obligatory for the entire population in order to detect those in violation of the law. No one's IQ should exceed that of the beloved, admired, and never fully appreciated leader, in which case 99.999% of the population would have been classified with the label “undesired existence” if it hadn't been the case that...

People are so freaking ingenious. All over the internet and on the street you could buy a pill that inhibited your cognitive processes. “Don't risk it, choose the safe option. It's all legal, my friend,” the advertisements said. Also for sale were copies of the IQ test, although you had to pay extra if you wanted the incorrect answers included that would assure your safety. You could also sign up for test-prep courses where you learned how to score low.

Except for a 6-year-old girl who vomited up the pill, everyone successfully demonstrated that they were not more intelligent than the supreme leader. The little girl and her entire family were exiled, so that it couldn't be said that the supreme leader separated kids [*“hijos”*] from

their parents. NOTIMEX corrected “nor *hijas*.”

Another section prohibited atheism. Agnosticism would only be tolerated if it wasn’t made manifest in “word, thought, or deed.” The atheist population had to go underground, though not for long: someone alleged that atheism could be just as fanatical as any other religion. Thus the Permissible Religions Institute (PRI by its initials in English) incorporated atheism as a religion. Though classified far below other religions (including Light of the World,<sup>9</sup> etc.) and of course far below AMLOism—that charming syncretism that combines various religions with Alfonso Reyes<sup>10</sup>—which wasn’t declared the official religion only out of a saintly sense of shame and virginal modesty.

What triggered everything, some said, was the section of the LUE that referred specifically to the population that self-identified as originary peoples, but which were often called “indigenous,” “Indians,” or “that rabble of indians,” etc. The law made it obligatory for speakers of strange languages (that’s what it said) to register themselves and relocate to concentration camps so as not to

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<sup>9</sup>A nontrinitarian Christian denomination founded in 1926 and headquartered in Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico. It has been in the news recently as top leaders were arrested in Los Angeles on charges of sex crimes. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La\\_Luz\\_del\\_Mundo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La_Luz_del_Mundo)

<sup>10</sup>Alfonso Reyes [1889-1959] was a Mexican writer, philosopher, diplomat, and member of the PRI. He was author of a 1944 text “*Cartilla Moral*” on civil behavior and morals, which has been controversially promoted by López Obrador and his Secretary of Education, Esteban Moctezuma Barragán, for distribution to public school teachers in Mexico.

offend the rest of society with their presence. Their concentration would also facilitate the distribution of state handouts. Built with laudable foresight, the concentration camps included Elektra stores with Banco Azteca ATMs inside, so that “clients” could receive their government “aid” and spend it right then and there. The supreme leader thus achieved one of his foundational promises: to produce consumers for the products offered to the poor by Salinas Pliego.<sup>11</sup> Rumor had it that these establishments were basically the 4T’s version of the company store.

As was to be expected, the Zapatista peoples refused this order and insisted on offending the dear leader. According to some versions, that was when Subcomandante Insurgente Moisés answered with a quote by Jacinto Canek, from Ermilo Abreu Gómez:

*“The prophecies of Nahua Pech, one of the five prophets of old, have come to pass. The whites will not be content with what they*

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<sup>11</sup>Salinas Pliego is owner of the major retail store Elektra (which, according to Forbes, targets low income customers), Banco Azteca (which, according to Forbes, offers credit to low income clients), as well as the major television channel TV Azteca (<https://www.forbes.com/profile/ricardo-salinas-pliego/#2085d88b1346>). López Obrador’s government has channeled its aid programs through bank cards issued by Banco Azteca, franchises of which are located inside Elektra stores. Salinas Pliego’s wealth has increase 56% since he earned the government contract for the aid programs, making him the third richest man in Mexico (<https://www.proceso.com.mx/579865/fortuna-de-salinas-pliego-crecio-56-3-y-2019-podria-ser-su-mejor-ano-por-programas-de-amlo-forbes>). Salinas Pliego is also part of López Obrador’s Business Advisory Council.

*have. Nor with what they've won in the war. They will want even our meager food and our miserable huts. They will raise their hatred against us and will force us to take refuge in the hills and the backlands. Then, like ants, we will become scavengers and we will eat bad things, roots, jackdaws, crows, rats and locusts. And the rottenness of this food will fill our hearts with rancor and war will come.*"<sup>12</sup>

An "organic intellectual" of the 4T wrote a long essay in the newspaper supplement that he directs, denouncing the Zapatistas' opposition to the divine designs of the supreme leader as yet another Machiavellian calculation from "SubMarcos" (so he said) who thought that his timing was going to be able to affect the 4T's inexorable, triumphant, and overwhelming march, and that in reality the EZLN was missing out on an amazing opportunity because for the first time ever, all "ethnicities and dialects" (that's what he wrote) would be gathered together at once. Laura Bozzo then wrote in her column that Subcomandante Insurgente Moisés' response was yet more evidence of the EZLN's sectarianism, and that Zapatismo was wrong in isolating itself from "the poor of the earth" (that's what she said). She also said that the CNI and the CIG should, as a tactical movement, accept the generous governmental support and take advantage of the opportunity and to study her articles... and follow their mandates.

In the pro-4T social networks the hashtag #fuckingin-

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<sup>12</sup> Ermilo Abreu Gómez, *Canek: History and Legend of a Maya Hero*. University of California Press, 1979, pg 60.

dianssentby salinas emerged, although it was never clear if it referred to the “bad” Salinas (Salinas de Gortari, who could no longer hide behind the *Chanel* skirts of Rosario Robles and was instead now in open flight) or the “good” Salinas (Salinas Pliego, who was making a killing with López Obrador’s “Sembrando Vida” cards).<sup>13</sup>

As a consequence, the National Guard was sent in “to impose order and progress which had been impeded by those criminals.” NOTIMEX added “male AND female criminals.”

Pro-4T social media users organized themselves into a patriotic campaign with the genius hashtag #zapatista-soutofmysight (supposedly invented by an *influencer* who produces soap operas) calling for a mass mobilization to Chiapas to temporarily enlist in the always glorious, heroic, and powerful National Guard. Nobody showed up though, because, according to another influencer, “*it’s one thing to sign up for something on your phone and quite another to actually have to travel. —ALV.*” This second message got three million likes.

Showing off weapons donated by the US army (when Operation’s Head of Central Command complained to the embassy that the weapons were obsolete, the ambassador responded, “Yeah but you’re just going to fight some fucking Indians, right?”), the shiny new National Guard,

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<sup>13</sup>“Sembrando Vida” is one of López Obrador’s aid programs in which people are paid to work on tree plantations cultivating one million hectares of land in the south of Mexico with invasive and commercializable tree species. See footnote vi on Salinas Pliego.

which up to this point had occupied itself with extorting migrants and escorting Sabritas, BIMBO, and LALA delivery trucks, made its triumphant entrance into “the bastion of Zapatismo.” NOTIMEX meanwhile, made the correction, “into the hideouts of the sinners (*pecadores* AND *pecadoras*.)”

Upon entry, the National Guard only found smoke. The Zapatista communities had retreated to the mountains after setting their houses and harvests on fire. The so-called “Nino Canún<sup>14</sup> of ecologists” famous for his article “The Decline of Academic Decency and the Splendor of Obsequiousness”<sup>15</sup> which got him an appointment to the presidential cabinet, wrote an article denouncing the environmental damage caused by the Zapatista stubbornness. “It is unacceptable,” he wrote, “that our brave Guards have to breath that smoke, which also dulls the shine of their new guns and uniforms.”

The supreme leader ordered a freeze on the bank accounts of all the human rights organizations and NGOs that support projects in the area because, as he said, “they’re really just beachheads for the Illuminati.” The Fray Bartolomé de las Casas Human Rights Center didn’t

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<sup>14</sup> Nino Canún is a journalist who appeared at one of López Obrador’s morning press conferences heaping praise on the president (for some 20 minutes) for his openness toward journalists like him, as other journalists booed him.

<sup>15</sup> A play on Victor M. Toledo’s January 15, 2019 article in La Jornada, “El esplendor de AMLO y el ocaso del EZLN” (“The Splendor of AMLO and the Decline of the EZLN”). López Obrador named Toledo Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources in May 2019. <https://www.jornada.com.mx/2019/01/15/opinion/016a1pol>.

close their doors though. Men, women, and children from the surrounding communities, even from rival organizations and neighborhoods, came carrying chickens, tortillas, corn, beans, vegetables, fruit, a little moonshine, blankets, traditional blouses, skirts, and pants with colors so bright they were blinding. The “frayba’s,” as communities in Chiapas call them, never went hungry or suffered cold and they had enough to even share supplies with other NGOs. One thing though, they did gain some weight.

The Sixth and the Networks [of Resistance and Rebellion] also mobilized. They formed brigades, commandos, and battalions to go fight alongside the Zapatistas. But as soon as they descended from their dilapidated vehicles they were detained and sent to a concentration camp that had been hurriedly constructed in the “Victor Manuel Reyna” soccer stadium located in Chiapas’ capital.

Just like old times, in this camp communists, anarchists, and those who were neither one nor the other came together. There were tensions and insults, something that would have escalated had it not been for *loas otros*<sup>16</sup> who diffused the tensions. As an act of rebellion, they organized a football tournament (despite the fact that this demonic game had been banned and now only baseball was allowed). The trophy (which in reality was a styrofoam cup with coffee stains inside and the outside decorated with words in all colors and languages)

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<sup>16</sup>Literally “The Others,” *otros* combines “*otros*” and “*otras*” to allow for a range of possible genders.



was won by the **Loas otroas** (which would have made the already defunct [Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos] and the one on his way to being defunct [SubGaleano] so very happy). The National Guardsmen on duty joked, “*Oh that’s cute, the homos and the butches won.*” **Loas otroas** challenged the National Guard to a game, and they accepted immediately. Nobody knows how exactly, but when the game was about to start the goals went missing—they had been dismantled (presumably by the other prisoners) and “the homos and the butches” were lined up, each carrying a piece of pipe. The referee fled, followed by the national guardsmen, who forgot to close the gate. All the prisoners [*todos, todas, todoas*] escaped. They’re still on the most-wanted list.

As a result of globalization, the affair escalated to other parts of the planet. Zapatistas of every color, gender, and language began to appear. The honorable embassies of the 4T in various parts of the world came under siege and police forces in all those countries had to intervene in an international operation that was given the name “Fuck the Zapatistas now”...

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69 times 3 and 69 times 6

The day after the epic invasion by the National Guard, the headlines read “Subcomandante Moisés and SubGaleano shot down,” (NOTIMEX offered the following correction, “SubMarcos-Galeano”) and included a photo of Moisés’

hat and Marcos-Galeano's pipe and cap in a puddle of what was presumably blood.

The system being the system, advertisements soon appeared making the hat or the pipe and cap available for purchase, so you could take a selfie with them in your backyard, the nearest park, or even just a couple of well-placed flower pots. The Premium package included a bottle of thick red liquid that boasted, "Just like real blood!"

The strange part was that everybody claimed to have acquired "these trophies" (that's how they put it) in radically different locations. Some claimed they got them in La Realidad [Zapatista territory], others said they got them in La Garrucha, others in Oventik, some said they got them in Roberto Barrios, and still others claimed they got them in Morelia. But that was just the beginning. Soon claims began appearing from people insisting they had shot down the two Zapatistas in other cities altogether. Hours later, other claimed it had taken place in other parts of the world. Even Donald Trump got in on the game, tweeting that he had personally eliminated the two as they were trying to cross the border in El Paso, Texas. Putin couldn't be outdone and said it had been him but that it had been in Chechnya. Daniel Ortega insisted that it had all gone down in the Monimbó barrio and that "Chayito"<sup>17</sup> (that's what he said) had delivered the coup d' grace.

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<sup>17</sup>A reference to Daniel Ortega's wife.

One journalist from the “*fufa*” press (that’s a term straight from the supreme leader referring to any media outlet that wasn’t absolutely unconditional in their loyalty, neither *fú* nor *fa*, like neither truly in nor totally out—a new term that had to be invented because the previously designated “*fift*”<sup>18</sup> media were all either in exile, jail, or the cemetery) commented to another: “I’ve counted the ‘confirmed’ deaths of Marcos and Moisés and in addition to the fact that they supposedly all occurred simultaneously at very distant locations, there’s something else that’s strange”. “What’s that?” the second journalist asked. “Well, there are 69 of them.” “So?” the other insisted. The first journalist explained, “That’s the number that Marquitos used to use as a pun in his communiques. It seems to be that those two are in fact probably dead or dying—but of laughter.” “You should keep that to yourself,” the second journalist responded, “or you could lose more than your job.”

In Mexico City, the capital of the 4T, a historian finished his most recent book with the following words: “Proof that the Fourth Transformation is indeed underway is that, just as in the three previous transformations, it is built upon the defeat of the indigenous peoples.” And in a burst of spontaneity, he added, “*me canso ganso.*”<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>The term López Obrador uses for any media outlet that critiques his administration. Literally it would be something like calling them “bourgie,” but he uses the term universally for critique from any direction.

<sup>19</sup>A colloquial phrase used frequently by López Obrador which implies that what was promised will be carried out, whatever it takes. It

Thrilled with himself, he rushed off to see his buddy, a progressive bureaucrat who worked in the public, and pro-government, press, to see if he could publish his new book. His bureaucrat buddy said, of course. In fact, they wouldn't even bother to edit it but rather they would send it straight off to the printer. Isn't that what buddies are for, he asked? Then he added, "Hey, question for you since this is your area of expertise: could you recommend a psychiatrist? See, I've been getting calls from some Elías Contreras, talking in some strange language and the only word I can make out because he repeats it a lot is... *asshole... asshole... asshole.*" The distinguished official historian of the 4T told him not to worry, that it was probably just a bot, given that the current administration had detected clandestine "call centers" run by conservatives operating through satellites run by the Illuminati. They were just trying to meddle in the impeccable functioning of the impeccable machine of the impeccable 4T.

Meanwhile, in a residential zone of the city of Palenque, Chiapas, the Great Leader and Supreme Head of the Nation, Visionary Driver of the Vehicle of History, Beloved Comrade, Illustrious Guide, Victorious Defender of the Knights of the Zodiac, father of Rhaegal, Protagonist of the Seven Histories, Breaker of Chains, King of the First Men, Lord of the Seven Kingdoms and Protector of

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was recently used in reference to a controversial change in the Federal Law on Parastate Entities that would allow historian Paco Ignacio Taibo II to become Director of the Fund for Economic Culture in Mexico.

the Nation (nobody dared say his name anymore), was recharging himself with cosmic energy when he got news from his Communications Director : “they’ve killed both of them; the territory that was in the hands of those LUE lawbreakers has been conquered.” The supreme leader and giant of history hurriedly consulted his *dullphone* (an ingenious invention designed to avoid offending the intellectual level of its owner) and, after gazing reverently at the sky for a moment, tweeted: “glorious arms have been covered by the nation.”<sup>20</sup>

There was a moment of confusion in the social media. The government news agency NOTIMEX “improved” the original tweet and retweeted, “National arms have been covered with glory.” But given that screen shots were created by the enemies of true change, one of those privileged and fortunate souls who bask in the virtues of the supreme leader developed the most logical response for cases like these: he pronounced that the marvelous and unmatched genius of the superb leader had managed to transform history and give new meaning to its language. The original tweet of the “great shepherd” was not an error, you see, but an insight through which he endowed the original semantics with something uncommon and revolutionary. Social networks erupted in unison into

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<sup>20</sup>The famous phrase, “*Las armas nacionales se han cubierto de Gloria*,” or “The national arms have been covered with glory,” was written as a one-line telegram from Mexican General Ignacio Zaragoza to Mexican President Benito Juarez upon defeating the French Army on May 5, 1862, in the Battle of Puebla, a historic moment in the war to turn back the French invasion of Mexico.

hymns of praise for the dear leader.

That didn't last long though. The hashtag #abirdinthehandisworthstroking surpassed the patriotic #upyourselfuckingzapatistas as a national trending topic, and life went on, although not as quickly as death and destruction.

The supreme leader tended to spend a lot of time at his ranch in Palenque. There he and his family could use the train whose construction he had mandated and which allowed him to travel between his birthplace and the beach, all the while throwing blessings and Banco Azteca bankcards out the window. On social media, the 4T influencers insisted that there was nothing wrong with this; after all, Gomez Addams<sup>21</sup> and Sheldon Cooper<sup>22</sup> liked playing with trains, too.

Nobody else used that train. Those close to those in the leader's inner circle (try to avoid the echo) claimed that this was for the security of the great leader, but rumor has it that the train was doomed from the start.

While the news of the Zapatista defeat was still fresh and being broadcast on national television, Alfonso Romo<sup>23</sup> asked to speak with the supreme leader and presented him with a serious problem: the PARTY (yes, in all caps) was at risk of splitting in the leadup to the presidential election. The divisions stemmed from the fact that

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<sup>21</sup>The patriarch of the original cartoon and later TV show, *The Adams Family*.

<sup>22</sup>Character from *The Big Bang Theory*.

<sup>23</sup>Lopez Obrador's chief of staff.

both Claudia [Sheinbaum] and Ricardo [Monreal] wanted to be chosen [as the candidate]. Others were threatening to try to run, too. This created a situation that required a bold move. The supreme leader waited impatiently for his proposal. Alfonso Romo, blinded by the light emanating from the supreme leader, squinted and ventured: “reelection.” “Not a chance,” the supreme leader answered immediately, “that would be a violation of the constitution.” Romo prostrated himself and apologized, “it was just an idea.” The supreme leader thought for a moment and said, “although if there were constitutional reforms, it would be my obligation to comply with them.” A smile lit up Romo’s face, “Of course, boss, I’ll take care of it,” he declared. “But be careful,” the supreme leader interrupted him, “first, let’s try a temporary or intermediate measure. How about something like ‘effective voting, not immediate re-election.’ If you see that that goes through without problems, then try something like ‘effective voting, not re-election for more than seven consecutive terms.’”

Meanwhile, reality, which apparently hadn’t studied Alfonso Reyes’ *Cartilla Moral*<sup>24</sup> or attended AMLO’s morning press conferences, kept delivering its consequences to those who were responsible and those who were not.

On the other hand, in Zapatistas’ very other territory, things were not going well for the occupation forces. After just a few days, rumors and macabre myths began to

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<sup>24</sup>See footnote v.

circulate, saying that Xpakinté, a woman in a long, transparent white dress and with light skin and eyes, would appear at night and beguile the National Guardsmen into murdering each other (the last one standing would shoot himself in the chest). Undefined beings wearing only large *sombreros* made the machines break down and become useless. In the middle of the night a distant but intelligible chant was repeated “*there they come, there they come, who is coming? here they come*” with a rhythm strangely similar to that “La Carencia” track by the Panteon Rococo, which the National Guard and the engineers in charge of reconstruction to madness.

The barracks and camps of the National Guard and the offices of the big construction companies slowly emptied out without anybody really realizing it. Nobody ever even knew how many desertions there were; a different scandal rolled through social media and the morning press conferences and everybody on the outside began to forget about the mystical mountains of the Mexican Southeast.

What happened next was documented by the independent, alternative, autonomous, and whatever-you-call-them media: anonymous colorful graffiti began to appear, at first in isolated locations, and then slowly filling the walls and fences of the marginalized barrios of the cities and the wood buildings of the rural communities, which read, “Why so serious?”

That was Subcomandante Insurgente Moisés’ third death, and the sixth for SupMarcos or SupGaleano or



whatever you call him. In all they were killed 69 times this time.

The Zapatista peoples came down from the mountains. Nobody understood how it was that they survived those conditions, although it was rumored that they had received clothing, food, and musical instruments from the CNI communities. Upon arriving in their new lands, the Zapatistas did what they always do in these cases: they organized a dance with music from marimbas, keyboards, drum sets, guitars and violins. The Xpakinté and the *Sombrerones* danced the cumbia "*la del moño colorado*" [the Girl with the Red Bow], but now with a new melody, as if it were a message from a new world to the old one that was dying, slowly and almost silently, up above.

And that is how the always already dead died once again, but this time in order to live.

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All of this is a real exercise in fiction. It wouldn't really happen... or would it?

(To be continued...)

From one corner of the mountains of the Mexican  
Southeast,  
Woof-meow.

The Cat-Dog, swatting at the moon (somebody should tell it that that is not the way to convince her... or is it?)

EZLN

Mexico, August of 2019

Videos:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fJ6svVjBaho>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pc95OmIEhfM>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y4CxfgMdGNE>

## SONATA FOR VIOLIN IN G MINOR: MONEY

*The devil's finest trick is to persuade you that he does not exist.*

Charles Baudelaire in "The Generous Gambler"

### I. The Eighth Passenger

Nowhere, or everywhere. A drowsy train drifts off to its own purr. It isn't coming from or going to anywhere in particular. Or at least not anywhere that matters. A dismal population whose haggard lives seem to hang by a thread nod off on board. In the last car, seven bored, grubbily dressed and solitary passengers, their lives as wretched as their clothes, shift irritably in their seats and lament their situation.

*"I'd do anything to turn my luck around,"* one says. They were speaking a universal language and the other six passengers nod in silence. Just then the long and battered train enters a tunnel, intensifying the shadows and hiding the passengers' faces. The door opens and an eighth passenger walks in. The passenger's clothes practically scream, *"I'm not from around here,"* but they sit down without a word. The tunnel stretches out the darkness.

A thunderous crack interrupts the silence, like a dry

branch breaking but without a storm to blame. A pair of blazing eyes appear in the darkness: *“I don’t think I need to introduce myself,”* the fiery gaze hisses, *“You have all conjured me in one way or another and I’m responding to your call. Make a wish: you pay with your soul. Name your price.”*

The first passenger chooses health, to never get sick again. *“Done,”* Satan responds, picking up the healthy soul and throwing it in his bag.

Another passenger chooses wisdom, to know everything. *“Done,”* the devil murmurs, picking up the wise person’s soul and tossing it in his bag.

The third passenger opts for beauty, to be admired. *“Done,”* says the king of hell, tossing the beautiful one’s soul in his bag.

The fourth asks for Power, to rule and be obeyed. *“Done,”* Lucifer says under his breath, the soul of the new ruler added to his bag.

The fifth wants “pleasure,” to awaken passion at will. *“Done,”* the demon replies with a contented smile. The hedonist’s soul disappears into the devil’s bag.

The sixth passenger sits up straight and pronounces the desire for fame, to be widely recognized and praised. *“Done,”* Satan declares without a pause, and the famous soul takes its place among the other prisoners.

The seventh passenger practically sings their request for “love.” *“Dooooooooone,”* the evil one replies with a guffaw, and the lover’s soul goes into the depths of the bag.

The fallen angel looks impatiently at the eighth passenger who hasn’t said anything and is merely scribbling

in a notebook.

Lucifer addresses the passenger, asking sweetly, “*And what is your wish, traveler? You can have anything you want. All I ask in exchange is your transient soul.*”

The eighth passenger stands up and whispers, “*I am Money. I’ll buy all seven souls of those wretches who believed in you and I’ll buy you, too, to have you at my service and under my orders.*”

And “*the great dragon, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world*” (Revelation 12:9) smiled cunningly and, before getting into the bag of sold-out souls himself, condemned the passenger, “*Let it be so, Master Money, but in your very essence lies your own destruction and your fortune today will be your fall from grace tomorrow.*” Money took the bag and exited the last car of the train as the train pulled out of the tunnel.

Behind them darkness stretched ahead until it reached daylight...

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## II. On Crisis and Responsibilities

*When there is a crisis, buy low and wait for the crisis to pass in order to sell high. If there is no crisis, provoke one via war. To get out of a crisis, provoke another war. War, as Clausewitz did not say, is the way to get in and out of crisis by other means (nuclear wars included).*

Don Durito de La Lacandona. Beetle and Ph.D. in  
Jungle Economy

If the devil's finest trick is to persuade you that he does not exist, then one of the foundations of the capitalist system is to convince you that money can solve anything. Money is the lord and master of governments and the basis for their respective projects to go down in history as great Transformers. But...

Well, here I was going to try to explain that a global economic crisis is coming, but I don't really know much about political economy and besides, reality is explaining that point with better arguments and in a more pedagogical format than I could have. Even so, we have to take into account what else is coming.

We should point out that what is coming is not the current administration's fault, nor that of past administrations. What is commonly known as the "government of Mexico" has only one responsibility: to believe and make the rest of us believe that they have some way to ease the pain of what's coming—note that they don't even pretend anymore to be able to stop it. The "bad decisions" that one sector of the unenlightened right attributes to the government of the 4T<sup>25</sup> (the most commonly cited is the cancellation of the plan to build a new airport in Texcoco) have nothing to do with what is coming. The underlying message of this particular fragment of the actually existing right, which feels deceived and resentful, is "We'd be

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<sup>25</sup>AMLO has deemed his own governing project the "Fourth Transformation," supposedly on par with historic events such as Mexican Independence (1810), a period of reform in the mid-19th century, and the Mexican Revolution (1910).

better off without López Obrador,” a motto that is neither original nor true.

Any other candidate who landed in the presidential office (Meade, Anaya, el Bronco, or Ms. Xerox<sup>26</sup>) would have faced the same “adverse global environment” (that’s what big capital’s think tanks call it) and come out defeated and looking for someone to blame. Any of them would have done exactly what the current government is doing: lie and cook the books. I am of course speaking from and for the perspective of the ordinary peoples, but I’m sure other sectors could give their own grim accounts of whether or not they have benefitted from the political economy of the supreme leader, not to mention his social policies and egregious failure in fighting crime.

In any case, the displeasure shown by this particular sector of the right is amply compensated for by the total satisfaction from the rest (and the majority) of the right, not to mention big capital’s absolute delight with the administration’s policies that lay the groundwork for the explosion and escalation of the crisis that is coming.

The truth is (and I imagine this claim will bother them even more than if we had just said they’re all the same) that the current situation would be exactly the same un-

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<sup>26</sup>Margarita Zavala, wife of ex-president Felipe Calderón, who ran as an independent candidate in 2018, was accused of illegally using hundreds of thousands of photocopied or fraudulent voter identification cards in order to accumulate the number of registered voter signatures needed to appear on the ballot as an independent candidate. Although the National Electoral Institute approved her independent candidacy, public outcry forced to drop her run for president.

der the administration of any of those presidential hopefuls. Any one of them would have begun with a celebration of him or herself, solemnly declaring a new cycle of hope, jobs, and prosperity for the entire territory south of the Río Bravo [Rio Grande] and to the west of Guatemala and Belize. Any one of them would have distributed the same handouts, although under different names and slogans. Any one of them would have reneged on more than a few campaign promises and chalked up any criticisms to bitterness and envy. Any and all of them would have called for unity and patriotism, prostrating themselves before the plans, threats, and insults blabbered by the current overseer of that brutal and turbulent country to the north, and attributed their errors to an “adverse international environment.”

All of them, just like the current administration, would base their governing agenda on money. The only difference is that the current administration thinks its fictitious “fight against corruption” is more than enough to earn praise that actually corresponds to others [*otros, otras, otros*]: “But the 4T doesn’t steal!,” they’ll say. Even in that respect one could equivocate, as all those lovers of nuance will be able to read in another text someday...well, if it is ever published. But for now I’m going to point to a few facts upon which there can be no equivocation, facts which require that one take a clear position. For this task I haven’t resorted to the social networks and their “fake news,” nor to the press columns written for or against (each more pathetic than the next), nor to



the press tagged as “*fifi*,”<sup>27</sup> (I had to stop using *Proceso* as a source after a burp from the supreme leader erased an entire history of investigative journalism unmatched in other press outlets).<sup>28</sup> Thus I have limited myself to the facts and declarations reported by the government itself on its own webpages (including what has been said in public events and morning press conferences), and to reports by the “supportive” [uncritical] press.

This is in addition, of course, to an “in situ” investigation in our own environment: rural Chiapas. One could legitimately express doubt about what we report from that investigation—perhaps it’s all just a ploy to sabotage the supreme leader. Go right ahead, doubt us. But if you want to address those doubts you can do one of two things: investigate whether or not what we say is true, or wait and see what happens. The disadvantage of the former is that any journalist who investigates the veracity or falsity of what you’ll read below will join the ranks of the “conservatives”<sup>29</sup> (even if that journalist “nuances” the account by playing down the brutal reality of what is happening here). With regard to the second option—waiting to see if

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<sup>27</sup>The term with which López Obrador tags any media outlet that critiques his administration. It would be something like calling them “bourgie,” but he uses the term universally for critique from any direction.

<sup>28</sup>In a July 22, 2019 morning press conference, López Obrador accused *Proceso* magazine of being unfairly critical toward his administration and of having been complicit in the past with the PRI and PAN.

<sup>29</sup>López Obrador commonly tags any criticism from any source or sector as “conservative.”

time proves us right or wrong—well, look, the truth is that “time” is exactly what those above don’t have. In any case, while you should feel free to doubt our version of what is happening here, doesn’t it seem suicidal to doubt the reality that you yourself see and experience?

Facts:

- Take the festive tone of the supreme leader in his meetings with the representatives of economic power in Mexico and the world compared to the irritated and intolerant tone he takes upon hearing the demands or reproaches of ordinary people, especially ordinary people from the countryside. Sure, you can try to “nuance” that, but reality will correct you on a daily basis. His courtship of the representatives of money borders on the obscene, even when it doesn’t translate into the support he’s seeking. With regard to ordinary people, well, the supreme leader “doesn’t pay anybody to beat up on him.”<sup>30</sup>
- Take the imposition of a tyrant’s own enmities and affinities. Sure, I get that everybody has their likes and dislikes, but nothing gives anyone the

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<sup>30</sup>Famous phrase (“*no pago para que me peguen*”) from Mexican President José Lopez Portillo in the 1980s in reference to the media when he cancelled government advertising contracts with publications critical of his administration, including *Proceso Magazine*. <https://www.ny-times.com/1989/12/04/business/the-media-business-mexican-papers-want-to-keep-tie-with-state.html>:

right to impose those preferences on everybody else. When the president says so-and-so is a such-and-such, that has an effect on the population, and as the murder of Samir Flores demonstrates, the desire to please the supreme leader leads to crimes and distortions. Only tyrants seek copies of themselves among the governed, with predictable consequences for that nation.

- Take the treatment of migrants. Look around and you could say to yourself, “Tragic! In what kind of country do those horrors take place?” But the truth is that they happen here in the “Republic of Mexico.” What’s more, what comes out in the “supportive” press on the subject barely offers a glimpse into the nightmare imposed on Central American migrants on the southern border. Yes, and also on Africans, on people from the Caribbean, on Asians... and on Mexicans. Tell me, how do you distinguish between a person from Chiapas and one from Guatemala, Honduras, or El Salvador? Whether they have papers or not? Okay, go ask the INEGI [National Institute of Statistics and Geography] or the INE [National Electoral Institute] how many Mexicans in southeastern Mexico don’t have papers. Or is whether they can sing the national anthem? The immigration agents don’t even know the national anthem, and apparently neither does the president, which is why he’s so willing to be Trump’s doormat. That other aspiring candidate for 2024, Marcelo

Ebrard<sup>31</sup>, says that they are abiding by the law, but there is no law that says “everyone of short stature and dark skin who doesn’t speak Spanish or speaks it with an accent will be detained and required to show documents proving Mexican citizenship. These arrests may be carried out by the military, police (including traffic police), or immigration agents and do not require the presence of a translator, human rights defender, or any other potential obstacle to the ability of the president to comply with the quota of arrests dictated by his friend Donald Trump.” Fine, don’t believe this “fake news”; look in the press “supportive of the 4T.” Did you check? Okay, now try to “nuance” the nightmare.

- Take the servile, ass-kissing tone and behavior taken in front of the US government. We’ll talk more about that later but honestly, I don’t remember a Mexican government who has publicly groveled so shamelessly before a foreign government. If your argument justifying such indignities is that the supreme leader won a raised-hand referendum in a place where he had recently distributed government handouts, well good luck.
- Take the defeat of secularism. With the support of the catholic clergy, religion first waded into state affairs during the era of the “bad” Salinas, Carlos Salinas de Gortari, progressing through the admin-

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<sup>31</sup>Currently López Obrador’s Secretary of Foreign Affairs.

istration of Zedillo who sanctioned it by playing dumb, then through Vicente Fox's genuflections and Felipe Calderón's prudish sanctimoniousness to arrive at the indefensible militant religiosity of the current president. What is left of the nation will pay dearly for this defeat... and not on an extended payment plan like you can get in Elektra stores.<sup>32</sup>

- Take the implementation and acceleration of megaprojects and the destruction of ordinary people's territories. The argument that always gets dragged out about these projects being too far along to stop construction now didn't seem to matter in Texcoco. The supreme leader himself has justified the megaprojects, and his finger-pointing disqualification of the opposition to the Morelos thermoelectric plant cost our *compañero* Samir Flores Soberanes his life. In the crime section of the newspaper that's called "setting someone up." It doesn't matter what is said to try to evade or justify it, the government is responsible for his death. Go ahead, "nuance" that one: the president didn't pull the trigger. Yeah well, neither did Trump of course.
- Take this administration's policies encouraging individualism and challenging the community. This administration has argued that distributing aid

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<sup>32</sup>Appliance and electronics retail chain known for offering payment plans with extremely high interest rates and abusive terms, which according to Forbes Magazine targets low income customers (<https://www.forbes.com/profile/ricardo-salinas-pliego/#2085d88b1346>).

(cash) on an individual (rather than collective) level is more effective, since it will help “fight corruption.” First of all, if there is corruption within particular peasant organizations, NGOs, etc., then the government should say so: who, where, and how much. Omitting these details amounts to complicity (if you have any doubts about that, ask Robles<sup>33</sup>). If this administration doesn’t have any qualms about denouncing journalists and media outlets from its pulpit—“I’m not one to keep things secret,” as the president says—then he should be able to state clearly, for example: *“the CIOAC leadership—and it must be clarified which of all the CIOACs, the murderous one or one of the others—is skimming this much off the top of the cash distribution program. Enough of that, let them keep what they already swindled and let’s start this over right.”* Or, *“In such-and-such daycare in such-and-such place, the people in charge are eating all the cornflakes and drinking all the milk that’s supposed to be for the kids.”* Or, *“in this other daycare there are a bunch of children who were born out of sin and lust (wedlock), and our Lord and Savior said that one should not lie down with anyone with whom one does not have a pact of non-aggression and sensible frigidity.”* (I think that’s called “marriage.”)

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<sup>33</sup>Rosario Robles is the highest ranking official in former Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto’s [2012-2018] cabinet to be accused of large-scale corruption as part of the *Estafa Maestra* (Master Fraud) scandal. She is being held in preventative custody pending trial.

Now, in the case of the countryside, the problem isn't just individualized distribution. I mean, if the cabinet members and their aids who work on these issues have no imagination and can only conceive of either distributing to organizations or to individuals, fine, I get it, they are politicians after all. But to choose a bank as the mechanism for distributing the "blessings" of the government of the "Fourth Transformation"! What this amounts to, for the rural aid program "Sembrando Vida" ("Sowing Life")<sup>34</sup> for example, is that the most direct beneficiary of the program is the intermediary—the *coyote* or "middleman"—in this case, Banco Azteca, which belongs to the Grupo Elektra.<sup>35</sup>

The supreme leader claims that the pay-out to *campesinos* who join the program is \$5,000.00 pesos. That's false. A *campesino* can get a maximum of \$4,500.00 pesos (and in some cases only \$4,000.00).

Supposedly the reason that you can only get \$4,500.00 is because the other \$500 go into a savings account, the destiny of which is unclear. Those receiving aid are told that the funds will be "for the elderly" or that they will be used in the future to bring the goods—lumber and fruit—

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<sup>34</sup>AMLO's program for rural Mexico consists of monthly cash hand-outs to peasants to plant commercializable (and invasive) trees across one million hectares of the country, starting in the southeast.

<sup>35</sup>Grupo Elektra is the business group that owns both Banco Azteca and the Elektra stores. López Obrador's government is running its rural aid program through cash transfer cards issued by Banco Azteca, franchises of which are located inside Elektra stores. Banco Azteca and Elektra are both owned by Salinas Pliego, a member of López Obrador's Business Advisory Council.

to market. But just think: cedar and caoba trees need about 30 years to grow before they are “marketable”, that is, until it’s profitable to cut them down and sell them. But the president’s term ends in 5 years. If my math is right, that means it will take another 4 presidential terms before what is planted in the coming year (the plants are still in the greenhouse phase) will be marketable. Presumably, the beneficiaries will receive \$4,500 pesos every month for the next 29 years. Therefore, the Bolsonaro-Macri-Moreno who is already waiting in the wings to relieve the current administration from the storm will either commit him or herself to maintaining this program, or the program’s real purpose is to ensure peasant support for a single political party across multiple presidential administrations.

The issue is that through this money transfer, the bank retains 500 pesos (and in some cases, one thousand pesos, with the argument that peasants ought to save) for each “sower of life”. The supreme leader’s functionary in charge of this program has said there are as many as 230,000 “beneficiaries”. That comes out to 115 million pesos per month at the disposal of that bank. You can consult your favorite economist to find out what banks do with the savings of their account holders.

Now, in some branches of that “selfless” and “philanthropic” institution which is Banco Azteca, peasants are told that they will only be given \$4,000 pesos “so that they learn to save.” If all beneficiaries had this same “instinct” to save (such a valued quality in the culture of money),



then the government would be withholding 230 million pesos per month, multiplied by 12 months per year for 5 years starting in October of this year. But let's just assume that's not the case, and that only 115 million pesos per month is set aside as "savings" (that's 1.38 billion pesos per year, which comes out to 6.9 billion pesos in what's left of this presidential term). Now, if at the end of this presidency and in the presidential and legislative elections in 2024, God forbid this same supreme leader or someone from the same party were not to win, the "beneficiaries" would quickly turn into the "victims": they'll have 2.5 useless hectares of land [the size of the plot peasants are paid to plant under the "Sembrando Vida" program] because they won't be able to cover the cost of having lost their animals (if they planted over their pasture), or their cornfield (if they planted trees on "reclaimed" agricultural fields).<sup>36</sup>

Furthermore, the supreme leader (with the blessing of his "nuanced" advisers) is carrying out a new "agrarian reform" based on the program initiated by the "bad" Salinas (Carlos Salinas de Gortari). The requirement for joining the "Sembrando Lata" [Sowing Conflict] program in *ejido* communities is that the "rights holders" (the *ejido* members who have land rights) cede two hectares of that land to "solicitors". This means that the new agrarian reform of the 4T involves taking land from those who have the least and "redistributing" it. In addition to the fact that this has created a new form of corruption, it has

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<sup>36</sup><https://www.gob.mx/bienestar/prensa/el-programa-sembrando-vida-promueve-la-reforestacion-y-restauracion-productiva>

also divided party-affiliated communities [who receive aid] all the way down to the family level, pitting children (“solicitors”) against parents (“rights holders”), fights that can escalate into death threats.

In the Highland region of Chiapas, where there are small population clusters and land is measured in small plots called “*tareas*” rather than “hectares”, the situation would be comical if it weren’t tragic. *Campesinos* in this context uses the same piece of land (“*tarea*”) to plant corn, then beans, then a vegetable crop. In addition to the fact that almost no one owns 2 full hectares, if they plant what that idiot of a president wants, their little plot of land will be unusable for subsistence farming for the next 20 or 30 years. Apparently that’s irrelevant, since what matters are the monthly cash transfers that that peasant receives.

There are more stories that you won’t believe because you of course have better information and statistics. For now I’ll just say this: the equation that states that “x amount of money=y number of hectares planted” is false. The party-affiliated peasants receiving the aid often pretend to prepare the soil for planting, or “lend” each other hectares when the president’s project manager comes around, or they just cut a deal with that manager: “You just write down that I’m carrying out the greenhouse phase and that I have the two hectares required, and I’ll give you a cut of my \$4,500.”

And even so, hundreds of communities have rejected the program because, as they themselves say, “We’re not going to work as peons for the government. The

land belongs to us, not to that plantation owner-turned-government.” But surely the supreme leader has other statistics, and we are just in one small portion of one small state of the Republic. So let’s follow the money:

According to Grupo Elektra’s web page, every Elektra store has a Banco Azteca branch inside. That is, when a peasant goes to the bank to collect his hand-out-that’s-not-a-hand-out, the person behind the counter is wearing a shirt with the logos of the bank and the 4T. As should be expected, the person recommends both a savings account and an insurance package to the peasant: *“You never know what could happen. For example, your motorcycle could get stolen...What?! You don’t have a motorcycle?! Don’t worry, today is your lucky day—I’ve always said that lucky people sometimes don’t realize what they’ve got. Look, here we have this powerful machine, 125 cubic cm engine, Italika brand (a Grupo Elektra affiliate), and you can take it home today. Yes, today! And just for being you, I’ll throw in the helmet. Are you single? You are?? I’m surprised, someone as handsome as you... But anyway, look, a passenger fits comfortably on this bike. You’ll see, all the ladies are going to want you to take them for a spin. Now it’s better to buy this as a package so you can save yourself some hassle, you know what I mean? So I recommend that you go ahead and open your account here at the bank, get the insurance with it (it’s obligatory to open the account), buy the bike on a payment plan and get insurance on it in case it gets stolen or breaks down. You can home today on your motorcycle, helmet and all.”*

All this is real. A Zapatista *compa* accompanied his party-affiliated brother-in-law and witnessed everything

I've described. Of course, names have been omitted to protect the impunity... oh sorry, I mean the presumed innocence of the supreme government. And as for the motorcycle? Well, we don't know, the *compa* had to take public transportation back home because his brother-in-law, after paying for the motorcycle and the insurance, spent everything he had left on cases of beer. And they didn't both fit on the motorcycle: it was the beer or the *compa*. The beer won. The Zapatista *compa* came back angry: "*He's not even single! He's married to my little sister and they're going on their fourth kid. Just wait until my sister finds out—then he's really going to need that insurance.*"

The principle shareholders of Grupo Elektra are: Hugo Salinas Price, Esther Pliego de Salinas, and Ricardo B. Salinas Pliego (the first two are the parents of the third).

Mr. Hugo Salinas Price is a confessed tax evader, a confessed strikebreaker, and a confessed sponsor of far-right activities (such as MURO, the paramilitary arm of El Yunque<sup>37</sup>), all this according to his own book, *My Years with Elektra* (Diana Press, 2000). In it, one can read the following: "*Sadly, when the conditions of life are better, the people have time and resources to think of participating in uprisings concocted by trouble-makers. When life is hard, the people are more concerned with holding on to what they have*

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<sup>37</sup>An ultra-rightwing semi-clandestine Catholic political organization in Mexico with heavy influence inside the PAN (National Action) party. <https://nacla.org/article/building-city-god-mexico%27s-ultra-right-yunque>

*than with causing a ruckus.”*

This is the Grupo Elektra that was chosen by the supreme leader to manage the cash transfer cards of the 4T's “social policy.” More information can be found in Álvaro Delgado's article on the subject in *Proceso*, edition 2208 from February 24, 2019. Oops! I said I wasn't going to cite that heretical and demonic weekly. Ok, but you can do like I did and get a copy of the book, and believe me, it will give you chills. Or talk to Álvaro Delgado...but don't let the supreme leader find out.

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A complex crisis is brewing, what in the bunkers of capital is known as a “perfect storm.” This vessel we call “planet Earth” has been almost entirely dismantled and is being kept afloat by the same mechanisms that are destroying it. This stupid deadly cycle of destroying in order to rebuild what's been destroyed is hidden behind false evidence that has slipped into our common sense. The fundamental belief in the power of the individual, a belief that was born with the rewriting of human history, has created the myth that the individual is capable of anything.

The catch, hidden behind the myth of individuality, is that it absolves the system of its responsibility for its lethal consequences. Human beings, civilizations, languages, cultures, arts and sciences waste away, digested in the stomach of the machine, and the system's responsi-

bility is transferred to the individual. It is he or she who is the victim and the executioner. The murdered woman is responsible for the blows she receives, the rape she suffers, her disappearance and her death. She is a criminal for having been victim of a crime and she's a criminal for having spoken out against that crime. The same is true for children, the elderly, and people of different genders, cultures, languages, colors and races.

But don't pay any attention to us. Consult your favorite economist instead (and if they work for the government, be sure to tell them everything will be "off the record"). Perhaps they'll tell you that political economy is a science that operates based on laws, on causes and effects, and that it doesn't respond to will, tantrums, or fits from behind the pulpit; that political economy pays no mind to polls and it doesn't watch the morning press conferences; that political economy says that if a given set of conditions occurs (the causes), then a given phenomenon will be produced (the effect). Once you get bored with all the numbers and formulas, ask them: are we headed for a crisis? If you see that the economist takes out an umbrella (even though you are indoors) and apologizes, saying "well, there never were any guarantees," then you have several options. You could solemnly declare their statements to be fake news and then blather on about the mafia of power and the Illuminati, accusing the economist of being a conservative. You could ask the economist where they got their umbrella and whether they had any in lavender (to each their own). You could

cling tightly to the closest religion. Or, you could ask the economist if there is a solution, a way out, a fix.

The economist will respond with a bunch of formulas and statistics. Wait patiently for them to finish, and then instead of saying that you didn't understand any of what they said, ask them to summarize the answer. The economist might then respond, "The situation is very difficult, it would necessitate..." (a new torrent of formulas and statistics).

Or perhaps they'll simply say: "No, not in this system."

(To be continued... Huh? Oh, there isn't more? But I was just getting warmed up...Definitely not? Well, fine...just a few notes from the Cat-Dog and that'll be it, then...)

From the mountains of the Mexican Southeast  
SupGaleano tacking on some words from the Cat-Dog.

Mexico, August of 2019.

From the Notebook of the Cat-Dog:

- The problem with money is...you run out of it.
- When difference encounters another equally significant but distinct difference, it embraces and celebrates it. Difference doesn't seek a mirror, but rather something much more complex, more human: respect.

- Nature is a rubber wall that accelerates the velocity of the rocks we throw at it. Death doesn't return in the same proportion, but rather much stronger. There is a war between the system and nature, and that confrontation does not accept nuance or cowardice. Either you're with the system or with nature. Either you're with death or with life.

Woof-meow.

The Cat-Dog, changing tactics, casts languid eyes up at the moon, who doesn't have a damn clue what's going on.

Videos:

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2g2U9noUk\\_w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2g2U9noUk_w)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OUoLWxTs-ok>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HMxJtMoTnx8>



COMMUNIQUE FROM THE EZLN'S CCRI-CG  
AND, WE BROKE THE SIEGE

Communique from the Indigenous Revolutionary  
Clandestine Committee–General Command of the  
Zapatista Army for National Liberation Mexico

August 17, 2019

To the People of Mexico:

To the Peoples of the World:

To the National Indigenous Congress–Indigenous Gov-  
erning Council:

To the National and International Sixth:

To the Network of Support and Resistance and Rebellion:

*Hermanos, Hermanas, Hermanoas:*

*Compañeras, Compañeros, Compañeroas:*

We bring you our word. The same word as yesterday,  
today, and tomorrow. It is the word of resistance and  
rebellion.

In October of 2016, almost three years ago, during the  
20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Indigenous Congress

[CNI], the sister organizations of the National Indigenous Congress and the EZLN made a commitment to go on the offensive in our defense of our Territory and Mother Earth. Persecuted by the bad government, by caciques, by foreign corporations, by criminals, and by the law, and as we accumulated insults, derision, and dead, we the originary peoples (the guardians of the earth), decided to go on the offensive and circulate the words and actions of resistance and rebellion.

With the founding of the Indigenous Governing Council [CIG] and the selection of its spokesperson, Marichuy, the National Indigenous Congress gave itself the job of taking words of warning and organization to the brothers and sisters of the city and countryside. Meanwhile, the EZLN also went on the offensive in its struggle with its words, ideas, and organization.

The time has come to hold ourselves accountable to the CNI-CIG and its spokesperson so that their peoples can decide if we have lived up to what we promised. But it is not only the CNI-CIG that we are accountable to; we also have a pending debt with the organizations, groups, collectives, and individuals (especially those in the Sixth and the Networks [of Rebellion and Resistance], but not only them) that throughout Mexico and the world concern themselves with our Zapatista peoples. These are people who, whatever their calendars, geographies, and habits may be, disregard the walls, borders, and sieges that are erected to divide us so that their hearts can continue to beat close to our own.

The appearance of this new [presidential] administration has not fooled us. We know that the real boss has no other homeland than money, and that this same boss rules in the immense majority of the world's plantations that they call "countries." We also know that rebellion, dignity, and rage are absolutely prohibited. Despite that, all over the world, in its most forgotten and despised corners, there are human beings who resist being devoured by this machine and who refuse to give in, give up, or sell out. These people have many colors, they carry many flags, they come dressed in many languages, and their resistance and rebellion is enormous.

The big boss and his overseers build walls, borders, and sieges to try to contain these people who they claim are bad examples. But they never achieve their goal because dignity, courage, rage, and rebellion can't be held back or incarcerated. Even if they hide behind their walls, borders, sieges, armies, police forces, laws, and executive orders, sooner or later that rebellion will come asking for its due. On that day there will be neither forgetting nor forgiveness.

We know that our freedom will only come about through our own work as ordinary peoples. With the appointment of the new overseer to Mexico, the same persecution and death has continued. Within only a few months [of his administration], at least a dozen of our *compañeros* of the CNI-CIG who were in the struggle were murdered. Among the dead was a brother much admired by our Zapatista communities—Samir Flores Soberanes.

Samir was murdered after having been singled out by Mexico's overseer who, despite Samir's death, marches on with the neoliberal megaprojects that will disappear entire peoples, destroy nature, and convert the blood of our originary peoples into profits for powerful capitalists. Because of this, in honor of our Brothers and Sisters who have died, been jailed, or are persecuted or disappeared, we decided to name the Zapatista campaign that ends today and that we are now making public: "SAMIR FLORES LIVES." After years of silent work and despite the siege against our communities and the campaign of lies and defamation, despite military patrols, despite the presence of Mexico's National Guard, despite the counterinsurgency campaigns that were dressed up as social programs, and despite having been despised and forgotten, we have grown and we have made ourselves stronger.

### ...And We Broke The Siege

We broke the siege without asking for anyone's permission so that we could be with you all once again *hermanos, hermanas, hermanoas, compañeras, compañeros, compañeroas*. We defeated the government's siege of our communities—it did not work and it will never work. We broke their siege by travelling paths and routes that do not appear on any maps and cannot be detected on any satellites because they can only be found in the thought of our ancestors. The word, history, and example of our peoples, of our children, elders, men, and women also travelled

with us as we carried all of them along in our hearts. Out there we found food, shelter, a careful ear, and the word of others. We understood each other like only those who share pain, a history, indignation, and rage can understand each other. In this process we understood that the walls that are built and the sieges laid only bring death, and that the attempt to buy and sell consciences that is constantly undertaken by governments is more useless with every day that passes. These attempts no longer fool or convince anyone; today these practices are old and rusted, and they fail.

That is how we left this siege behind, and all the while the Big Boss was convinced that we were trapped inside. From afar we could see the backs of the National Guard, soldiers, police, government projects, handouts, and lies. We came and went, back and forth, 10, 100, 1000 times as the overseer watched without seeing us, so sure of the fear that his fear would instill. Those who tried to encircle us are nothing but a dirty stain that is itself encircled by an even larger territory of rebellion.

Herman@s, compañer@s:

Today we present ourselves to you with new *Caracoles* and more autonomous Zapatista municipalities in new zones of the Mexican southeast. We will now also have Centers of Autonomous Resistance and Zapatista Rebellion. In the majority of cases, these centers will also house a *caracol*, a Good Government Council, and Autonomous

Zapatista Municipalities in Rebellion (MAREZ). Though it took time, the five original *Caracoles*, as their name would imply, have reproduced themselves after 15 years of political and organizational work. Our Autonomous Municipalities and Good Government Councils also planted new seedlings and watched them grow. Now there will be 12 Caracoles, each with its Good Government Council.

This exponential growth that today allows us to move beyond the government's attempt to encircle us is due to two things:

First and foremost, our growth is due to the political/organizational work and example set by the women, men, children and elders of the Zapatista bases of support. It is especially due to the women and youth of the EZLN. *Compañeras* of all ages mobilized so that they could speak with other sisters in other organizations and sisters that had no organization. Without ever abandoning their own tastes and desires, the Zapatista youth learned from the sciences and arts and through these activities transmitted their rebellion to more and more youth. The majority of these youths, especially the young women, have now taken up posts in our organization and they steep this work in their creativity, ingenuity, and intelligence. Today we can say without any shame and with much pride that the Zapatista women are out in front of us like the *Pujuu* bird to show us the way and keep us from losing our way, on our flanks to keep us on track, and behind us so that we will not fall behind.

The second thing that made this growth possible are government policies that destroy communities and nature, particularly those policies of the current administration which refers to itself as the “Fourth Transformation.” Communities that have traditionally supported the political parties have been hurt by the contempt, racism, and voracity of the current administration, and they have moved into either hidden or open rebellion. Those above who thought that their counter-insurgent strategy of giving out handouts would serve to divide Zapatista communities, buy off non-Zapatistas, and generate confrontations and demoralization actually provided us with the final arguments that we needed in order to convince those brothers and sisters that it is far more useful to dedicate our efforts to defending our land and nature.

The government thought, and still thinks, that what people need are cash handouts. Now, the Zapatista communities and many non-Zapatista communities, as well as our brothers and sisters in the CNI in the southeast and all over the country, have responded and are showing the government that they are wrong. We understand that the current overseer was brought up in the PRI and within its “indigenist” vision in which originary people’s deepest desire is to sell their dignity and cease to be what they are. In that vision, indigenous peoples are simply museum artifacts or colorful artisanal items through which the powerful attempt to adorn the grayness of their own hearts. That vision also explains why this administration is so set on making sure that its walls (across

the Isthmus) and trains (the ones they maliciously call “Mayan”) include the ruins of a civilization as their landscape, with the added bonus that this way they can also please the tourists.

But we ordinary peoples are alive, rebellious, and in resistance. Meanwhile, the national overseer is trying to dress up one of his underlings, a lawyer who at one time was indigenous, so that he, as has happened throughout human history, can divide, persecute and manipulate those who were once his own people. This lawyer, who is now the head of the INPI [National Institute of Indigenous Peoples], must scrub his conscience every morning with pumice to carefully eliminate any traces of dignity. He hopes in this way to whiten his skin and take on the purpose and outlook of his real boss. His overseer congratulates him and congratulates himself because there is there nothing better for controlling a rebellious people than using one of them who has turned on his cause, who has converted himself into a puppet of the oppressor for money.

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During these now more than 25 years we have learned a lot.

Instead of climbing the ladder of official posts in the bad government or of converting ourselves into a poor copy of our oppressors, our intelligence and our knowledge was turned to the task of growing and building our



own strength.

Thank you to all the *hermanas*, *hermanos*, and *hermanas* from Mexico and the world who participated in the encounters and seedbeds that we convoked throughout this time. Thanks to you our imagination, creativity, and knowledge expanded and became more universal—in other words, more human. We learned to look, listen, and speak otherness without derision, without standing in judgement, and without labels. We learned that any dream that doesn't encompass the world is too small a dream. What we now present to you and make public is the product of a long process of reflection and searching. Thousands of Zapatista community assemblies in Mexico's southeast thought together and searched for the paths, ways, and times to make this possible, and—flying directly in the face of the powerful and their disdain in labelling us ignorant and stupid—using our own intelligence, knowledge and imagination to do so.

Here we present to you the names of the Centers of Autonomous Zapatista Rebellion and Resistance (CRAREZ). There are 11 new CRAREZ and 5 original Caracoles for a total of 16. In addition to the 27 original autonomous municipalities, that gives us a total of 43 (CRAREZ).

Names and location of the new *Caracoles* and Autonomous Municipalities:

1. New *Caracol*: *Colectivo el corazón de semillas rebeldes, memoria del Compañero Galeano* (The Heart of Re-

- bellious Seeds Collective, in Memory of *Compañero Galeano*). Its Good Government Council is called: *Pasos de la historia, por la vida de la humanidad* (The Path of History for the Life of Humanity). It will be located in *La Unión* on recuperated land just to the side of the ejido San Quintin where the bad government's army currently has its barracks.
2. New Autonomous Municipality: *Esperanza de La Humanidad* (Hope for Humanity). Its center will be located in the *ejido* Santa María in the official municipality of Chicomuselo.
  3. New Autonomous Municipality: *Ernesto Che Guevara*. It will be located in El Belén in what is the official municipality of Motozintla.
  4. New *Caracol*: *Espiral digno tejiendo los colores de la humanidad en memoria de l@s caídos* (Spiral of Dignity Weaving the Colors of Humanity in Memory of the Fallen). Its Good Government Council is called: *Semilla que florece con la conciencia de l@s que luchan por siempre* (Seed that Blooms with the Conscience of those who are Always in Struggle). It will be located in Tulan Ka'u on recuperated land located in the official municipality of Amatenango del Valle.
  5. Another new *Caracol*: *Floreciendo la semilla rebelde* (The Flowering of the Rebellious Seed). The Good Government Council there is called: *Nuevo amanecer en Resistencia y rebeldia por la vida y la humanidad* (New Dawn in Resistance and Rebellion for Life and Humanity). It will be located in Poblado Patria

- Nueva on recuperated land in the official municipality of Ocosingo.
6. New Autonomous Municipality: *Sembrando conciencia para cosechar revoluciones por la vida* (Cultivating Conscience in order to Harvest Revolutions for Life). Its center will be in Tulan Ka'u on recuperated land located in the official municipality of Amatenango del Valle.
  7. New Caracol: *En honor a la memoria del Compañero Manuel* (In Honor of Compañero Manuel). Its Good Government Council is called: *El pensamiento rebelde de los pueblos originarios* (The Rebellious Thought of the Originary Peoples). It will be located in Dolores Hidalgo on recuperated land located in the official municipality of Ocosingo.
  8. New Caracol: *Resistencias y Rebeldías por la humanidad* (Resistances and Rebellions for Humanity). Its Good Government Council is called: *La luz que resplandece al mundo* (The Light which Shines on the World). It will be located in Poblado Nuevo Jerusalem on recuperated land located in the official municipality of Ocosingo.
  9. New Caracol: *Raíz de Resistencias y Rebeldías por la humanidad* (Root of Resistances and Rebellions for Humanity). Its Good Government Council is called: *Corazón de nuestras vidas para el nuevo futuro* (Heart of Our Lives for the New Future). It will be located in the *ejido* Jolj'a in the official Municipality of Tila.
  10. New Autonomous Municipality: *21 de Diciembre*

- (December 21). It will be located in Ranchería K'anul Hulub in the official municipality of Chilón.
11. New *Caracol: Jacinto Canek*. Its Good Government Council is called: *Flor de nuestra palabra y luz de nuestros pueblos que refleja para todos* (The Flower of Our Word and the Light of Our Communities Reflected for All). It will be located in the community of CIDECI-Unitierra in the official municipality of San Cristóbal de Las Casas.

We would like to take this opportunity to invite The Sixth, The Networks [of Rebellion and Resistance], the CNI, and all honest people to come and participate, together with the Zapatista peoples, in building these CRAREZ. You might contribute to this effort by collecting the necessary construction materials, by making an economic contribution, by hammering, cutting, carrying, and guiding others, and by sharing these moments with us—whichever might be the most convenient way for you. In the next few days we will circulate another communique in which we will explain how, when, and where you can register to participate in these events.

\*

Brothers and Sisters,

**To the CNI-CIG:** we would like to set up a meeting to talk more about the work we have committed ourselves to: to share problems, difficulties, setbacks, and failings

so that we can see which seeds do not give us a good harvest, which seeds actually hold us back, so that we can avoid these seeds and harvest only the best of our struggle. We would like to get together with those who are really making an effort on the organizational front of the struggle so that we can talk about what a good harvest and a bad harvest are. More specifically, we would like to propose that we jointly hold what could be called the, "Forum in Defense of Territory and Mother Earth" (or whatever name you all see fit), which would be open to all people, groups, collectives, and organizations that are dedicated to the struggle for life. We propose that the forum be held during the month of October of this year on whatever days are most convenient for you. We would like to offer one of the *Caracoles* for the purpose of this forum or meeting on whatever dates you decide are most convenient.

**To the Sixth and Networks [of Rebellion and Resistance]:** we call on you all to get started on your analysis and discussion for the formation of an International Network of Rebellion and Resistance—whether that be a pole, a nucleus, a federation, a confederation, or whatever you might call it. This Network should be based on the independence and autonomy of those who constitute it, explicitly renouncing all attempts at hegemony or homogeneity, where mutual aid is unconditional and all share in each other's good and bad experiences, all the while working to circulate all the histories of the struggle that take place below and to the left.

To this end, we as Zapatistas will convoke bilateral meetings with groups, collectives, and organizations that are truly working in their own geographies. We will not hold large meetings for this purpose but we will make public in the next few days the how, when, and where of these proposed bilateral meetings. Of course, this is only for those who accept the invitation and always taking into account the varied calendars and geographies that you all might have.

**To those who have dedicated their life and their livelihood to art, science, and critical thought:** we will be inviting you to festivals, encounters, seedbeds, fiestas, exchanges, or whatever they might be called. We will let you know soon how, when, and where we might have these events. These will include CompArte and the Film Festival “Puy ta Cuxlejaltic” but not be limited to them. We hope to be able to have CompArtes specific to each art, for example, theater dance, visual arts [*artes plasticas*], literature, music, etc... In addition, there will be another edition of ConCiencias, but perhaps this time we will start with the social sciences. Finally, there will be another seedbed for Critical Thought and we are thinking we will begin with the topic of The Storm.

**A special invitation to those with walk with pain and rage, with resistance and rebellion, and who are persecuted:** we will convoke an encounter between the families of the murdered, disappeared, and imprisoned and those organizations, groups, and collectives that are dedicated to accompanying those families’ rage and

their search for truth and justice. The only goal of this encounter will be for everyone to meet each other so you might share your pain and your experiences throughout your search. We as Zapatista peoples will limit our role to serving as hosts for this event.

The Zapatista *compañeras* will convoke a new encounter among Women Who Struggle. They will do so in the time, place, and manner they decide and they will let you know their decisions as they see fit. We can tell you now that this encounter will only be for women, so we cannot give any more information until they have collectively decided those details.

We would like to explore the idea of having a meeting of *otroas* [others], with the goal of having people share their pain, injustices, persecution, and all the other fucked up shit that is done to them, but also so that they might share their forms of struggle and their strength. We as Zapatistas will limit our role to hosting this event.

We would like to see if it is possible to hold an encounter between groups, collectives, and organizations that work in the defense of Human Rights, in the manner and form they themselves decide upon. We the Zapatistas will limit ourselves to acting as hosts for such an event.

Compañer@s and herman@s:

Here we are; we are Zapatistas. So that you could see us, we covered our face. So that we could have a name, we left our names behind. We risk our present so that we

might have a future. So that we might live, we die. We are Zapatistas, the majority of us have indigenous Mayan roots, and we do not give up, we do not give in, and we will not sell out.

We are rebellion and resistance. We are only one of the many sledgehammers that will tear down their walls, one of the many winds that will sweep this earth, and one of the many seeds that will give birth to other worlds.

We are the Zapatista Army of National Liberation.

From the Mountains of Southeastern Mexico.

On Behalf of the Men, Women, Children and Elders of the  
Zapatistas Bases of Support

For the Clandestine Indigenous Revolutionary  
Committee–General Command of the Zapatista Army of  
National Liberation

Subcomandante Insurgente Moisés

Mexico, August of 2019



## FUENTE

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