

THE STORM...

It will be born from the conflict of these two winds; its time has now come; the oven of history is now stirred. The wind from above now reigns, but the wind from below comes and the storm arrives... and so it will be...

THE PROPHECY...

When the storm subsides, when the fire and rain leave the earth in peace once again, the world will no longer be the world but something better.

Lacandona Jungle, August, 1992

Communiqué, January 2, 1994

Declaration of War of the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN)

(Published in La Jornada, January 6, 1994)

DECLARATION FROM THE LACANDONA JUNGLE
TO THE PEOPLE OF MEXICO:
MEXICANS:

We are a product of 500 years of struggles. The first struggle was against slavery, in the war of Independence against Spain led by the rebels. Later, the struggle began to avoid being overwhelmed by North American expansionism. Afterwards began the struggle for our Constitution and the struggle to drive the French Empire from our land. When the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz refused the just application of the laws of Reform and the people rebelled, leaders such as Villa and Zapata arose, poor people like ourselves. We have been denied access to the most basic education so as to be used as cannon fodder and to be deprived of the wealth of our homeland. Little do they care that we have nothing, absolutely nothing, not even a decent roof over our heads, nor land, nor work, nor health, nor food, nor education. We're not entitled to freely and democratically elect our authorities. We have no independence from the foreigners, no peace, no justice for ourselves or our children.

But today we say ENOUGH! We are the heirs of the true founders of our nationality. We are the dispossessed millions and we summon all our brothers and sisters to join us in this call, as the only path to avoid starving due to the endless greed of a dictatorship that has prevailed for over 70 years now, headed by a group of traitors who stand for the most conservative sectors, traitors of our nation. They are the ones who opposed Hidalgo and Morelos and who betrayed Vicente Guerrero. They are the ones who sold more than half of our territory to the invading foreigners. They are the ones who brought a European prince to rule over us. They are the ones who were against the Petroleum Expropriation. They are the ones who slaughtered the Railroad workers in 1958 and the students in 1968.¹ They are the same ones who deprived us of everything, absolutely everything!

To bring all this to an end and as a last resort, after attempting change through all legal means as set forth by our Constitution, to which

¹ The Railroad strike of 1958-1959 was viewed by many as the last great strike by independent labor in Mexico. As a result of the strike, 13,000 railroad workers were blacklisted and the leaders were imprisoned. The 1968 slaughter of the students, occurred in the Tlatelolco, site of an ancient Aztec market, where nearly 400 students died in one night.

we resort in order to apply Article 39, which reads: 'The national sovereignty resides essentially and originally in the people. All public power arises from the people and is instituted for their benefit. The people have, at all times, the inalienable right to alter or modify the form of their government.'

Therefore, pursuant to our Constitution, we issue this communiqué to the Mexican Federal Army, bastion of the dictatorship that afflicts us, monopolized by the party in power and led by a federal executive illegally occupied by the highest, illegitimate chief, Carlos Salinas de Gortari.

Consistent with this Declaration of War we ask other Powers of the Nation to dedicate themselves to the restoration of the legality and stability of the nation by overthrowing the dictator.

We also ask of the International Agencies and of the International Red Cross that they watch over and regulate the battles that our forces will unleash by protecting the civilian population. We declare now and forever that we are subject to that which is stipulated by the Laws of War of the Geneva Convention forming the Zapatista National Liberation Army as a belligerent force of our struggle for liberation. We have the Mexican people on our side, we have the Homeland and the tricolored Flag that is loved and respected by all the insurgent combatants. We are using the colors of red and black on our uniform, symbols of the working people in their struggles and strikes. Our flag carries the letters 'EZLN', Zapatista National Liberation Army and we will always take this flag into our battles.

We reject outright any attempt to defame the just cause of our struggle with accusations of narcotrafficking or 'narco-guerrilla', banditry or other qualification that our enemies might use against us. Our struggle is tied to constitutional law and has justice and equality as its banner.

Therefore, and consistent with this Declaration of War, we give our military forces of the Zapatista National Liberation Army the following orders:

First: Advance toward the capital of the country defeating the Mexican Federal Army, protecting the civilian population in your liberating advance and permitting the liberated people to elect, freely and democratically, their own administrative authorities.

Second: Respect the lives of prisoners and turn in the wounded to the International Red Cross for medical attention.

Third: Initiate summary judgements against soldiers of the Mexican Federal Army and the political police who have received courses and who have been trained, assisted or paid by foreigners whether within or outside our nation; against those accused of betraying our Homeland and against all those who repress and mistreat the civilian population and rob or assault the good of the people.

Fourth: Form new ranks with all those Mexicans who show interest in join-

ing our just struggle, including those that, being enemy soldiers, surrender without fighting to our forces and swear to follow the orders of the General Command of the ZAPATISTA NATIONAL LIBERATION ARMY.

Fifth: Ask for the unconditional surrender of the enemy quarters before entering into combat.

Sixth: Bring to an end the plundering of our natural wealth in the areas controlled by the EZLN.

PEOPLE OF MEXICO: We free and honest men and women are conscious that the war we declare is a last and final measure. The dictators have imposed an undeclared and genocidal war against our people for many years. We therefore ask for your resolute participation in supporting this plan of the Mexican people who struggle for work, land, housing, food, health, education, independence, freedom, democracy, justice and peace. We declare that we will not cease fighting until we attain the fulfillment of these basic demands of our people, forming a government for a free and democratic country.

MEMBER OF THE REBEL FORCES OF THE
ZAPATISTA NATIONAL LIBERATION ARMY
General Command of the EZLN