

1. THE REVOLT

[The Mexican Awakener [*El Despertador Mexicano*] is the newspaper of the EZLN, issued on January 1 in conjunction with the uprising. It was the first document released by the Zapatistas. It contains their Declaration of War, an editorial, and the revolutionary laws.]

El Despertador Mexicano

Declaration of War

[from a photocopy of the original]

Lacandona Jungle, December 31, 1993

TODAY WE SAY ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!
TO THE PEOPLE OF MEXICO:
MEXICAN BROTHERS AND SISTERS:

We are the product of 500 years of struggle: first against slavery, then during the War of Independence against Spain led by insurgents, then to avoid being absorbed by North American imperialism, then to promulgate our constitution and expel the French Empire from our soil, and later the dictatorship of Porfirio Di'az denied us the just application of the Reform Laws, and the people rebelled and leaders like Villa and Zapata emerged, poor people just like us. We have been denied the most elemental preparation so that they can use us as cannon fodder and pillage the wealth of our country. They don't care that we have nothing, absolutely nothing, not even a roof over our heads: no land, no work, no health care, no food, no education. Nor are we able to freely and democratically elect our political representatives, nor is there independence from foreigners, nor is there peace nor justice for ourselves and our children.

But today, we say ENOUGH IS ENOUGH. We are the inheritors of the true builders of our nation. The dispossessed, we are millions, and we thereby call upon our brothers and sisters to join this struggle as the only path, so that we will not die of hunger due to the insatiable ambition of a 70-year dictatorship led by a clique of traitors who represent the most conservative and sell-out groups. They are the same ones who opposed Hidalgo and Morelos, the same ones who betrayed

Vincente Guerrero, the same ones who sold half our country to the foreign invader, the same ones who imported a European prince to rule our country, the same ones who formed the "scientific" Porfirista dictatorship, the same ones who opposed the Petroleum Expropriation, the same ones who massacred the railroad workers in 1958 and the students in 1968, the same ones who today take everything from us, absolutely everything.

To prevent the continuation of the above, and as our last hope, after having tried to utilize all legal means based on our Constitution, we go to our Constitution, to apply Article 39, which says:

"National Sovereignty essentially and originally resides in the people. All political power emanates from the people and its purpose is to help the people. The people have, at all times, the inalienable right to alter or modify their form of government."

Therefore, according to our Constitution, we declare the following to the Mexican Federal Army, the pillar of the Mexican dictatorship that we suffer from, monopolized by a one-party system and led by Carlos Salinas de Gortari, the supreme and illegitimate federal executive who today holds power.

According to this Declaration of War, we ask that other powers of the nation advocate to restore the legitimacy and the stability of the nation by overthrowing the dictator.

We also ask that international organizations and the International Red Cross watch over and regulate our battles, so that our efforts are carried out while still protecting our civilian population. We declare now and always that we are subject to the Geneva Accord, forming the EZLN as the fighting arm of our liberation struggle. We have the Mexican people on our side, we have the beloved tri-colored flag, highly respected by our insurgent fighters. We use black and red in our uniform as a symbol of our working people on strike. Our flag carries the following letters, "EZLN," Zapatista National Liberation Army, and we always carry our flag into combat.

Beforehand, we reject any effort to disgrace our just cause by accusing us of being drug traffickers, drug guerrillas, thieves or other

names that might be used by our enemies. Our struggle follows the Constitution, which is held high by its call for justice and equality.

Therefore, according to this declaration of war, we give our military forces, the EZLN, the following orders:

First: Advance to the capital of the country, overcoming the Mexican Federal Army, protecting in our advance the civilian population and permitting the people in the liberated area the right to freely and democratically elect their own administrative authorities.

Second: Respect the lives of our prisoners and turn over all wounded to the International Red Cross.

Third: Initiate summary judgments against all soldiers of the Mexican Federal Army and the political police who have received training or have been paid by foreigners, accused of being traitors to our country, and against all those who have repressed and treated badly the civilian population, and robbed, or stolen from, or attempted crimes against the good of the people.

Fourth: Form new troops with all those Mexicans who show their interest in joining our struggle, including those who, being enemy soldiers, turn themselves in without having fought against us, and promise to take orders from the General Command of the EZLN.

Fifth: We ask for the unconditional surrender of the enemy's headquarters before we begin any combat to avoid any loss of lives.

Sixth: Suspend the robbery of our natural resources in the areas controlled by the EZLN.

To the People of Mexico:

We, the men and women, full and free, are conscious that the war that we have declared is our last resort, but also a just one. The dictators have been waging an undeclared genocidal war against our people for many years. Therefore we ask for your participation, your decision to support this plan that struggles for work, land, housing, food, health care, education, independence, freedom, democracy, justice and peace. We declare that we will not stop fighting until the basic demands of our

people have been met by forming a government of our country that is free and democratic.

JOIN THE INSURGENT FORCES OF THE ZAPATISTA
NATIONAL
LIBERATION ARMY!

General Command of the EZLN
December 31, 1993

Editorial

Mexicans: workers, campesinos, students, honest professionals, Chicanos, and progressives of other countries: We have begun the struggle that is necessary to meet the demands that never have been met by the Mexican State: work, land, shelter, food, health care, education, independence, freedom, democracy, justice and peace.

For hundreds of years we have been asking for and believing in promises that were never kept. We were always told to be patient and to wait for better times. They told us to be prudent, that the future would be different. But we see now that this isn't true. Everything is the same or worse now than when our grandparents and parents lived. Our people are still dying from hunger and curable diseases, and live with ignorance, illiteracy and lack of culture. And we realize that if we don't fight, our children can expect the same. And it is not fair.

Necessity brought us together, and we said "Enough!" We no longer have the time or the will to wait for others to solve our problems. We have organized ourselves and we have decided to demand what is ours, taking up arms in the same way that the finest children of the Mexican people have done throughout our history.

We have entered into combat against the Federal Army and other repressive forces: there are millions of us Mexicans willing to live for our country or die for freedom in this war. This war is necessary for all the poor, exploited and miserable people of Mexico, and we will not stop until we achieve our goals.

We call on all of you to join our movement because the enemies we face, the rich and the State, are cruel and inhuman. They will put no limit on their bloody instinct to destroy us. It

is necessary to struggle on all fronts and from there, with your sympathy, your solidarity, the dissemination that you give our cause, your adoption of the ideals that we are demanding, your incorporation of the Revolution by raising up your people wherever they may be found, these are very important factors in our final triumph.

El Despertador Mexicano is the newspaper of the EZLN. It strives to inform the people about the development of the just war that we have declared against our class enemies.

In this first issue we present our Declaration of War against the Federal Army, and we publish the orders to be followed by the leaders and officers of the EZLN in our advance through national territory. Also in this issue are the Revolutionary Laws that will be enacted in the liberated territories in order to guarantee their revolutionary control and strengthen the bases so we can begin the process of building a new Mexico.

To live for our country or die for freedom.

Revolutionary Laws

Women's Revolutionary Law

In the just fight for the liberation of our people, the EZLN incorporates women into the revolutionary struggle, regardless of their race, creed, color or political affiliation, requiring only that they share the demands of the exploited people and that they commit to the laws and regulations of the revolution. In addition, taking into account the situation of the woman worker in Mexico, the revolution supports their just demands for equality and justice in the following Women's Revolutionary Law.

First: Women, regardless of their race, creed, color or political affiliation, have the right to participate in the revolutionary struggle in a way determined by their desire and capacity.

Second: Women have the right to work and receive a just salary.

Third: Women have the right to decide the number of children they will have and care for.

Fourth: Women have the right to participate in the affairs of the community and hold positions of authority if they are freely and democratically elected.

Fifth: Women and their children have the right to primary attention in matters of health and nutrition.

Sixth: Women have the right to education.

Seventh: Women have the right to choose their partner, and are not to be forced into marriage.

Eighth: Women shall not be beaten or physically mistreated by their family members or by strangers. Rape and attempted rape will be severely punished.

Ninth: Women will be able to occupy positions of leadership in the organization and hold military ranks in the revolutionary armed forces.

Tenth: Women will have all the rights and obligations elaborated in the Revolutionary Laws and regulations.

Urban Reform Law

In the urban zones controlled by the EZLN, the following laws will be enacted in order to ensure dignified housing for all dispossessed families:

First: The inhabitants of the zone who own their own homes or apartments will stop paying all taxes.

Second: The inhabitants of the zone who pay rent, and have resided in the same dwelling for more than 15 years, will stop paying rent to the owner of the property until the revolutionary government triumphs and new legislation is enacted.

Third: The inhabitants of the zone who pay rent, and have resided in the same dwelling for fewer than 15 years, will pay only 10% of the salary earned by the head of the family as rent, and will not pay at all after having resided in the dwelling for 15 years.

Fourth: Urban lots that already have public services will be opened for immediate occupation

in order that dwellings may be constructed on said lots--even if the dwellings are only of a provisional nature. The freely and democratically elected authorities will be notified of these occupations.

Fifth: Vacant public buildings and large mansions will be provisionally occupied by families, who will divide the buildings among themselves. In order to facilitate this, the civil authorities will appoint neighborhood committees that will decide on requests that are presented to them and will grant living space on the basis of need and available resources.

Labor Law: Additions to the Present Law

The following laws will be added to the current Federal Labor Law in the zones controlled by the EZLN.

First: Foreign companies will pay their workers an hourly salary in national money equivalent to what would be payed in dollars outside the country.

Second: National companies will increase their workers' salaries monthly, by a percentage determined by a local Prices and Salaries Commission. Said Commission will be composed of representatives of the workers, settlers, land-owners, business people and the freely and democratically elected authorities. The reduction of current salaries will in no way be permitted.

Third: All workers in the countryside and the cities will receive free medical care in any public or private health center, hospital or clinic. The medical costs will be covered by the employers.

Fourth: Every worker will have a right to a certain amount of non-transferable stock in the company for which they work, the exact quantity to be determined by the number of years that the worker has worked for the company--this in addition to their current pensions. The monetary value of said stock will be used for the worker's retirement, by his wife or by his beneficiary.

Industry and Commerce Law

First: The prices of basic products will be

regulated by a local Prices and Salaries Commission. Said Commission will be composed of workers, settlers, land owners, merchants and the freely and democratically-elected authorities. Increases in the prices of basic products cannot, in any way, be more than increases in salaries.

Second: The hoarding of any product is prohibited. Hoarders will be detained and turned over to the military authorities, accused of sabotage and treason to the country.

Third: The commerce of a given region should be able to ensure the provision of tortillas and bread for all in time of war.

Fourth: The industries and businesses that the landowners consider unproductive, and attempt to close in order to carry away the machinery and raw materials, will be passed to the management of the workers, and the machinery will become the property of the nation.

Social Security Law

First: Abandoned children will be fed and protected by the nearest neighbors under the authority of the EZLN, before being turned over to the civilian authorities, who will protect them until they reach 13 years of age.

Second: Elderly people without family will be protected and will receive priority in housing and the distribution of free food coupons.

Third: Those incapacitated by the war will receive attention and work priority under the direction of the EZLN.

Fourth: The pension of retirees will be equal to the minimum salary established by local Price and Salary Commissions.

Justice Law

First: All prisoners in all prisons will be liberated, except those guilty of murder, rape and the leaders of drug-trafficking operations.

Second: All government officials, from the level of the municipal president up to the president of the republic, will be subject to audit, and will be judged for misappropriation of funds in cases

where evidence of guilt is found.

Revolutionary Agrarian Law

The poor campesinos' movement in Mexico demands the return of the land to those who work it and, in the tradition of Emiliano Zapata and in opposition to the reforms to Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution, the EZLN again takes up the just struggle of rural Mexico for land and freedom. With the object of standardizing the new agrarian distribution enacted by the revolution throughout Mexican territory, the following Revolutionary Agrarian Law is issued:

First: This law is valid in all Mexican territory, and benefits all poor campesinos and Mexican agricultural laborers regardless of their political affiliation, religious creed, sex, race, or color.

Second: This law affects all agricultural properties and agro/livestock businesses inside of Mexican territory, whether they are national or foreign-owned.

Third: All poor-quality land in excess of 100 hectares and all good-quality land in excess of 50 hectares will be subject to the Revolutionary Agrarian Law. The landowners whose lands exceed the aforementioned limits will have the excess taken away from them, and they will be left with the minimum permitted by this law. They may remain as small landholders or join the cooperative campesinos' movement, campesino societies, or communal lands.

Fourth: Communally held land and the land of popular cooperatives will not be subject to agrarian reform, even though they exceed the limits mentioned in the third article of this law.

Fifth: The lands affected by this agrarian law will be distributed to the landless campesinos and the agricultural laborers who thus request it as collective property for the formation of cooperatives, campesino societies or agricultural production/livestock collectives. The affected lands should be worked collectively.

Sixth: The collectives of poor, landless campesinos and agricultural laborers—men, women, and children without land title, or who have land

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of poor quality-will have the right to be the first to request land.

Seventh: In order to better cultivate the land for the benefit of the poor campesinos and the agricultural laborers, the expropriation of large estates and agricultural/livestock monopolies will include the expropriation of means of production such as machinery, fertilizer, stores, financial resources, chemical products and technical expertise. All of these means should pass into the hands of the poor campesinos and agricultural laborers, with special attention given to groups organized in cooperatives, collectives and societies.

Eighth: The groups that benefit from this agrarian law should dedicate themselves to the collective production of necessary foodstuffs for the Mexican people: corn, beans, rice, vegetables and fruit, as well as to the raising of cattle, bees, pigs and horses, and to the production of animal-derived products (meat, milk, eggs, etc.).

Ninth: In time of war, a portion of the products of the lands affected by this law will be designated for the sustenance of orphans and widows of revolutionary combatants, and to the support of the revolutionary forces.

Tenth: The purpose of collective production is primarily to satisfy the people's needs, to instill in those who benefit from this law a consciousness of collective work and benefit, and to create production, defense and mutual-aid units in the Mexican countryside. When a region doesn't produce some product, it will trade justly and equally with another region where it is produced. Excess production can be exported to other countries if there is no national demand for the product.

Eleventh: Large agricultural businesses will be expropriated and passed to the hands of the Mexican people, and will be administered collectively by the workers of those businesses. The cultivation machinery, seeds, etc. that are sitting idle in factories and businesses will be distributed among rural collectives, with the objective of making the land fertile and ending the hunger of the people.

Twelfth: Individual hoarding of land and the means of production will not be permitted.

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Thirteenth: Zones of virgin jungle and forest will be preserved. There will be reforestation campaigns in the principal zones.

Fourteenth: The riverheads, rivers, lakes and oceans are the collective property of the Mexican people, and they will be cared for by not polluting them and by punishing their misuse.

Fifteenth: In order to benefit the poor, landless campesinos and agricultural workers, in addition to the agrarian redistribution established by this law, commercial centers will be created to buy the campesinos' products at a fair price and to sell to them, at a fair price, goods that the campesino needs for a dignified life. Also, community health centers will be created with every benefit of modern medicine, with capable and conscientious doctors and nurses, and with free medical care for the people. Recreation centers will be created for the campesinos and their families so that they may rest in dignity without the need for bars or bordellos. Educational centers and free schools will be created where the campesinos and their families can receive an education, regardless of their age, sex, race or political affiliation, and where they can learn the techniques necessary for their development. Housing and road construction centers will be established with engineers, architects, and the necessary materials for the campesinos' dignified housing and the construction of good roads for transportation. Service centers will be created in order to guarantee potable water, drainage, electricity, radio and television, in addition to everything necessary for housework: stoves, refrigerators, lavatories, mills, etc.

Sixteenth: The campesinos who work collectively will not be taxed. Nor will the ejidos, cooperatives or communal lands be taxed. From the moment that this Revolutionary Agrarian Law is implemented, all debts--whether they are from credit, taxes, or loans--that are owed by the poor campesinos or agricultural workers to the oppressive government, to foreigners or to capitalists, are forgiven.

Law of Rights and Obligations
of Peoples in Struggle

In its liberatory advance through Mexican territory, and in the struggle against the

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government and against the large national and foreign exploiters, the EZLN will implement, with the help of the people engaged in struggle, the following Law of Rights and Obligations of Peoples in Struggle:

First: The peoples in struggle against the oppressor government and the large national and foreign exploiters, without regard to their political affiliation, religious creed, race or color, will have the following rights:

A: To choose, freely and democratically, the authorities of whatever type they consider convenient, and to demand that they be respected.

B: To demand that the revolutionary armed forces not intervene in matters of civil order or the disposition of capital relating to agriculture, commerce, finances, and industry, as these are the exclusive domain of the civil authorities, elected freely and democratically.

C: To organize and exercise armed defense of their collective and private goods, as well as to organize and exercise the vigilance of public order and good government according to the popular will.

D: To demand that the revolutionary armed forces guarantee the safety of people, families and private and collective property of neighbors or transients, when these people are not enemies of the revolution.

E: The inhabitants of every population have the right to acquire and possess arms to defend their persons, families and property, according to the laws of disposition of capital of farms, commerce, finance and industry, against the armed attacks committed by the revolutionary forces or those of the government. By the same token, they are fully authorized to make use of those arms against whatever person or group of people assaults their homes, the honor of their families, or attempt to commit robberies or attacks of whatever form against their persons. This is valid only for those who are not enemies of the revolution.

Second: The civil authorities of whatever type, who are elected democratically, will have, in addition to the previous rights and the attributions that are signalled by the respective revolutionary laws, the following rights:

A: They will be able to imprison, disarm and turn in to the Commands anyone they find robbing, raiding or looting any home or committing any other violation, for which they will receive their deserved punishment, even if they are a member of the revolutionary armed forces. The same procedures will be employed against those who commit any violation, even if they are not caught in the act, if their guilt is sufficiently demonstrated.

B: They will have the right that, for their conduct, revolutionary taxes be imposed as established by the War Tax Law.

Third: Peoples in struggle against the oppressor government and the great national and foreign exploiters, without regard to their political affiliation, religious creed, race or color, will have the following obligations:

A: To give their services in works of vigilance, according to majority will or the military necessities of revolutionary war.

B: To respond to calls for help made by the democratically elected authorities, the revolutionary armed forces or by any revolutionary military person in cases of urgency, to combat the enemy.

C: To lend their services as mail deliverers or guides to the revolutionary armed forces.

D: To lend their services to carry food to the revolutionary troops when they are combatting the enemy.

E: To lend their services to transport wounded, bury cadavers or other similar works tied to the cause and interests of the revolution.

F: To give food and lodging to the revolutionary forces that are guarding or passing through the respective populations, to the degree that they are able.

G: To pay taxes and contributions established by the War Tax Law and other Revolutionary Laws.

H: They should not help in any way the enemy, nor give them articles of primary necessity.

I: To dedicate themselves to legitimate work.

Fourth: The civil authorities, of whatever type elected democratically, will, in addition to the previous obligations, have the following obligations:

A: To regularly report to the civil population on the activities under their command and the origin and destination of all of the material resources and human posts in their administration.

B: To regularly inform the respective Command of the revolutionary armed forces of any events that occur in their area.

Instructions to Leaders
and Officials of the EZLN

The following orders are obligatory for all leaders and officials of troops under the control the Zapatista National Liberation Army.

First: You will operate according to the orders that you receive from the General Command or from the Commands of the Front Line.

Second: The leaders and officials who are in military operations in isolated zones or with difficulties in communicating with the Commands should carry out their military work, combatting the enemy constantly, according to their own initiative, taking care to advance the revolution in the places where they find themselves working.

Third: You will submit a War Dispatch whenever possible, or at least monthly, to the respective Commands.

Fourth: You will endeavor to preserve, as much as possible, good order among the troops, especially when you enter populaces, guaranteeing in full the lives and interests of the inhabitants who are not enemies of the revolution.

Fifth: To aid the troops in their material necessities to the degree possible, you should impose war contributions on the businesses or property-holders who find themselves in the zones where you are operating, but only if they have important capital according to the War Tax Law and the Revolutionary Laws that affect commercial, agricultural, financial and industrial capital.

Sixth: The material funds that are gathered by these means will be employed strictly for the material necessities of the troops. The leader or official who takes any of these funds for his personal benefit will be taken prisoner and judged according to the rules of the EZLN by a revolutionary military tribunal.

Seventh: For the feeding of the troops, pasture of the horses, and fuel and repair of the vehicles, you should direct yourselves to the democratically elected authorities of the place in question. This authority will gather what they can from among the civilian population, for the material necessities of the Zapatista military unit, and will hand them in to the leader or official of the highest rank in said military unit, and only to him.

Eighth: Only those officials with the rank of Major or higher will change authorities in those places that fall under the power of the revolution, according to the will of the people, and according to available and relevant sections of the Law of Revolutionary Government.

Ninth: The people, in general, will take possession of their goods according to what is established in the Revolutionary Laws. The leaders and officials of the EZLN will give to these people their moral and material support, with the goal of carrying out what is set out in these Revolutionary Laws, whenever the same people request this help.

Tenth: Absolutely no one will be able to have meetings or treaties with the oppressor government or with its representatives without the prior authorization of the General Command of the EZLN.

War Tax Law

In the zones controlled by the EZLN the following War Tax Law will be instituted and will be made to function with all of the moral, political and military force of our revolutionary organization.

First: The War Tax Law will apply from the moment that a military unit of the EZLN begins to operate in a specific territory.

Second: The War Tax Law affects all of the civilian, national or foreign populations

residing in or passing through said territory.

Third: The War Tax Law is not obligatory for the civilian population that lives by its own resources, without exploiting any labor whatsoever and without obtaining any advantage from the people. For poor campesinos, day workers, workers, employees, the unemployed, participation in this law is voluntary and in no way will they be obligated morally or physically to subject themselves to this law.

Fourth: The War Tax Law is obligatory for those in the civilian population who live by exploitation, by force or through work or who obtain some advantage over the people in their activities. Those small, medium and large capitalists of the countryside and the city can be obligated to obey this law without exception, in addition to submitting themselves to the Revolutionary Laws affecting agricultural, commercial, financial and industrial capital.

Fifth: The following percentages of taxes will be established, according to the work of each person:

A: For small commercial businesses, small property holders, workshops and small industries, 7% of their monthly income. In no way will their means of production be affected by the collection of this tax.

B: For professional people, 10% of their monthly income. In no way will materials strictly necessary for the exercising of their profession be affected.

C: For medium-size property-holders, 15% of their monthly income. Their property will be affected according to the respective Revolutionary Laws of agricultural, commercial, financial and industrial capital.

D: For large capitalists, 20% of their monthly income. Their property will be affected according to the respective Revolutionary Laws of agricultural, commercial, financial and industrial capital.

Sixth: All of the goods seized from the armed forces of the enemy will be property of the EZLN.

Seventh: All of the goods recuperated by the revolution from the hands of the oppressor

government will be the property of the revolutionary government according to the laws of the revolutionary government.

Eighth: All taxes and burdens imposed by the oppressor government will be ignored, such as those debts of money or goods that the exploited people of the country and the city find themselves obligated to pay by those governing or by capitalists.

Ninth: All of the war taxes recovered by the revolutionary armed forces or by the organized people will become the collective property of the respective populations, and will be administered according to the popular will by the democratically elected civil authorities, giving to the EZLN only what is necessary to contribute to the material necessities of the regular troops, and for the continuation of the liberatory movement according to the Law of Rights and Obligations of Peoples in Struggle.

Tenth: No civil or military authority, whether it be of the oppressor government or of the revolutionary forces, will take for personal or family benefit any part of these war taxes.

Law of Rights and Obligations of the Revolutionary Armed Forces

The revolutionary armed forces of the EZLN, in their struggle against the oppressor government and the great national and foreign exploiters, and in its liberatory advance over the Mexican territory, commit themselves to the carrying out and enforcement of the following Law of Rights and Obligations of the Revolutionary Armed Forces:

First: The revolutionary troops of the EZLN in their combat against the oppressor will have the following rights:

A: The troops that pass through a village will have the right to receive from the people, through the democratically elected civil authorities, lodging, food and the means to accomplish their military missions, according to the means of the inhabitants.

B: The troops that, by orders of the respective commands, are garrisoned in a place, will have the right to receive lodging, food, and means

according to what is established in section (A) of this article.

C: The leaders, officials or soldiers who observe that some authority does not fulfill what is established by the Revolutionary Laws, and lack popular approval, will have the right to denounce this authority to the revolutionary government.

Second: The revolutionary troops of the EZLN, in their combat against the oppressor, have the following obligations:

A: To make sure that those peoples who have not named, freely and democratically, their authorities, proceed immediately to free elections of the same, without the intervention of the armed forces, which under the responsibility of their military orders, will let the population work without any pressure whatsoever.

B: To respect the civil authorities elected freely and democratically.

C: To not intervene in civil matters, and to let the civil authorities work freely on these matters.

D: To respect legal commerce that obeys the respective Revolutionary Laws.

E: To respect the agricultural redistribution carried out by the revolutionary government.

F: To respect the rules, customs and agreements of the people and to submit themselves to them in cases of civil-military relations.

G: To charge no taxes to the population, in no way and under no pretext, for the use of its land and waters.

H: To not take over, for personal use, the lands of the people, or of the estates taken away from the oppressor.

I: To obey all of the laws and rules issued by the revolutionary government.

J: To not demand personal services or works of personal benefit from the civilian population.

K: To report those subordinates who commit any crime, imprison them, and remit them to a

revolutionary military tribunal, so that they may receive their deserved punishment.

L: To respect civil justice.

M: The leaders and officials will be responsible before the respective Commands for the abuses or crimes of subordinates who are not remitted to revolutionary military tribunals.

N: To dedicate yourselves to making war against the enemy until they are definitively removed from the territory in question or are annihilated.

Testimonies of the First Day

[The following are excerpted transcriptions that were published in La Jornada. They were recorded in San Cristo'bal de las Casas just after the EZLN liberated the city on January 1, 1994, and the transcription was published in La Jornada on January 19. They begin with Subcommander Marcos answering questions after reading the Declaration of War from the balcony of the Municipal Presidential Palace.]

[La Jornada, 1/19]

Q: Have there been any losses?

Marcos: No. Neither ours nor the enemy's. Only in Ocosingo. There were two dead and two wounded and four prisoners on their side.

Q: The military zone is here, less than 12 kilometers away. They have not responded?

M: You have to take into account that it is a difficult situation, because this is the command of the 31st Military Zone. And they attack the back and three fronts. It is not as though you say, OK, now I will come and finish with San Cristo'bal.

Q: Why are some of you masked and others are not, although you are all from the same movement?

M: Those of us who are more handsome always have to protect ourselves... What is happening is that, in this case, the officers are those who are masked, for two reasons. One, the primary

one, is that we have to watch out for protagonism, in other words, that people do not promote themselves too much.

The mask is so that there is no protagonism, if you understand me, that we sometimes have a lot of, those of us who get into this business of appearing a lot. So now, since it is not well known who is who, probably in a little while another will come out, or it could be the same one. It is about being anonymous, not because we fear for ourselves, but rather so that they cannot corrupt us; for that reason some wear ski masks, so that they will not appear often and say, "What about me over here?" We know that our leadership is collective and that we have to submit to them. Even though you happen to be listening to me here now because I am here, but in other places others, masked in the same way, are talking. This masked person today is called Marcos here and tomorrow will be called Pedro in Margaritas or Josue' in Ocosingo or Alfredo in Altamirano or whatever he is called.

Finally, the one who speaks is a more collective heart, not a caudillo. That is what I want you to understand, not a caudillo in the old style, in that image. The only image that you will have is that those who make this happen are masked, then. And the time will come when the people will realize that it is enough to have dignity and put on a mask and say: Well then, I can do this too, and OK, I do not need to be of a particular physique. That is the truth, and for that reason, you should not believe what I said when I said I was very handsome. I am doing propaganda for myself.

Q: And women are in this movement voluntarily?

M: Did someone obligate you to come? They are Tzotziles, Tzeltales, Tojolabales- Indians.

Q: What is the average age?

M: A scandalous 22 years old. It has gone up. When we started it was 16 years. Then, four years ago, it was 20, and now the average age is between 22 and 23 years old. There are people much younger than that, but the average of the troops is that. Those who have masks are officials or people that...

Q: Command?

M: No, that is what will not check out. You are going to check out all that you see with what you read. You will check Tupamaros, Montoneros, the Sandinista Front (Frente Sandinista), 26th of July Movement (Movimiento 26 de Julio), URNG. Nothing will check out. "They are a mess." "They are going to win." This is an organization that has been preparing itself for over 10 years without a single assault, robbery or kidnapping. "Where did they get money for what they did?" "Who protected them for so long?" They are going to say that we were part of the government. Today had to come so that we could demonstrate that we are not.

Q: How many people make up the Zapatista Army... Can you tell us?

M: I will tell you that there are thousands, and that they are all moved to take these actions.

Q: Will there be more?

M: Of course. After this, here, when we leave here, from these positions, when we advance, we are certain that more will join us. Three or four hours ago we received information that an element of the Federal Army deserted and joined our ranks. They have offered to show us the location of the barracks... No, he will not show us tactics. We know more than he.

Q: Who was the source?

M: The deserter from the Army who joined our ranks.

Q: What assurances does the press have to enter into the zones?

M: In our zones, with us, you will not have problems; but I am sure that the Army will not let information pass through. Or that your editorial boards or your bosses will not let you publish it.

Q: Can you provide the resources of the City Hall for our work, what you have here, like the phone lines, fax?

M: Go in and look for them if you like. Oh, you're asking... I was already up there looking for a telephone because I had to talk to Human Rights, to the National Commission. No, man, they have stolen everything. There are computers and

all of that, we do not do anything with that...
Yes, there is communication. The only thing I can
guarantee is where we move, and if you present
your newspaper credentials, they will let you
pass.

Q: Are you only here, in the state of Chiapas?

M: No.

* * * * *

M: [...] We hope that the people understand that
the causes that have moved us to do this are
just, and that the path that we have chosen is
just one, not the only one. Nor do we think that
it is the best of all paths. We only think that
this is one that needs to be taken and we invite
all of the people to do the same, not to rise up
in arms, but to struggle for a truly free and
democratic government in Mexico that can fulfill
the aspirations of each and every person. We do
not want a dictatorship of another kind, nor
anything out of this world, not international
Communism and all that. We want justice where
there is now not even minimum subsistence. This
is in the whole state of Chiapas. And one can
say: Well, soon I am going to rise up in arms.
No, but do demonstrate your agreement, each
person where you work, students, teachers, and
all of that, make count what they have denied us
until now, which is the right to have an opinion,
to feel, to dissent. That is what we want. We
resorted to this because, well, because they did
not leave us any other way, really.

Q: Do you think the conditions are right to do
what you are doing?

M: Yes, we think that the time is ripe at an
international level. We think that at the
international level there is a sensibility for
the Mexican people to rise up against a
dictatorship of such long standing, in this case
of a party, as it was in Europe. And at the
national level, there is much discontent, but
what was needed was for someone to give a lesson
in dignity, and this fell to the most ancient
inhabitants of this country that is now called
Mexico, but when they were here it did not have a
name, that name. It fell to the lowest citizens
of this country to raise their heads, with
dignity. And this should be a lesson for all. We
cannot let ourselves be treated this way, and we
have to try to construct a better world, a world

truly for everyone, and not only for a few, as the current regime does. This is what we want. We do not want to monopolize the vanguard or say that we are the light, the only alternative, or stingily claim the qualification of revolutionary for one or another current. We say, look at what happened. That is what we had to do.

We have dignity, patriotism and we are demonstrating it. You should do the same, within your ideology, within your means, within your beliefs, and make your human condition count.

Q: It is speculated that you are a member of some political party.

M: Well, they have asked this question often, if we are a member of the PRD or of the PAN or some faction within the PRI that is against [then-Presidential-candidate Luis Donaldo] Colosio.

But the truth, we tell you sincerely, is that the political parties do not come to Indigenous people in Chiapas. They do not come and the people are tired of butting their heads against the wall. For that reason, we grew here, precisely because the political parties do not have consensus.

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Q: Don't you think that people are afraid of you?

M: I think that they did not have bigger problems than us... Well, more than fear. That yes, but that we would rape and mutilate and all of that, no. But aside from that, I hope that the fear has gone. You should understand than any mess that we could have made here we would have done at dawn, when you were sleeping; that is, you should recognize that. You realized what was going on when the morning was quite advanced, when we were already here. You drank a toast to the new year and went to sleep, and we fell on you, but like a slap. I think that the force is not against everyone, quite the opposite.

Q: Why did you pick those four towns, did you have that already planned?

M: We have everything planned.

Q: In the state [of Chiapas]?

M: Comita'n, Tuxtla, Palenque, Arteaga,

Tapachula...

Q: Not just four towns?

M: Well wait, and we'll be right behind you. Everything is planned down to the hut of Tres Mari'as and the Cuernavaca-Mexico highway. And from there we have planned how to enter. Some say that we should stay and eat some quesadillas in Tres Mari'as... The plan is to go on to all of the towns. We will go on to all of the towns. The thing is that we are the majority. That is the truth. But we will try to follow the bosses of San Cristo'bal and not cause any problems to the civil population and try to convince the Army to come over from the side of injustice.

The immediate objective is that our agricultural laws begin to operate in the liberated zones, that the campesinos organize themselves, taking land, respecting small rural property and working in collectives, ignoring all of the debts with the government. Banrural (Banco de Cre'dito Rural), all of the taken assets, all of that, we don't know anything about in the rural zone because where we move those laws will start to operate, that is, the old Constitution before they reformed it. That is the immediate plan that we have, that is, to organize the rural life of this country according to the will of the majority of our compan~eros. That is, that there be land, because there is land, and that it be distributed, because they just said that they were not going to give any more out.

So before it was running around in Agrarian Reform, which they would probably give you. Well now, even if you run around, they won't give it to you. That is what Hank Gonza'lez and Salinas de Gortari said when they said: Land reform is over.

Q: Listen, what about the stores?

M: I said a little while ago up there that businesses will be permitted to open. We will not do anything to private commerce, only to the government. But everything, the mini-buses, the gas stations, we are not prohibiting them from opening. We guarantee them that we will not attack any store because the law about that says...

Q: Could tomorrow be a normal day?

M: Yes, let's see if you can live with that. In any case you will have to live always with that threat over your head, until the problem of social justice for these people is resolved, they will come back any moment. You were always scared of the black legend that we would kill you, rape you and mutilate you, and you saw that we didn't.

* * * * *

[In the tape a man can be heard who, with difficulty, reads a document.]

I am going to communicate some of the decisions that our Clandestine Revolutionary Indigenous Committee, leadership of our revolution, has decreed today:

First: that the stores and businesses that belong to the oppressor government be opened so that the people of San Cristo'bal can take from them what they need. Only the stores and businesses that belong to the federal and state government, nothing against local commerce.

Second decree: directed at the command of the 31st Military Zone with headquarters in Rancho Nuevo, of the federal government, to invite the body of officers, classes and troops to abandon the ranks of the evil government and pass, with all of their instruments and all of their experience, to the side of the struggle of the people. In case the garrison of the 31st Military Zone does not accept the abandonment of the cause of the evil government and embrace the cause of the people, then I am ordered to ask for the unconditional surrender of those barracks at the date and time that it be communicated appropriately. I make public, therefore, the offer for the 31st Military Zone and the battalions and units of the Federal Army to abandon the federal government and join our cause in one single army, respecting their ranks and their chain of command. [applause]

It has already been agreed and tomorrow a commission is ready to certify that we did not harm anyone: It will be allowed to leave on the side of Tuxtla. After this time [six in the morning] when the delegation is formed and can see that nothing happened to them, you will be able to leave the city on the side I already mentioned, and you will be able to come here for a safe conduct so that they will let you pass. We are speaking with the National Human Rights

Commission so that there can be a representative of theirs on the other side to guarantee the passage of tourists without being harmed by the federal troops. This is a negotiation that we are doing. What we can guarantee is that when this delegation is formed, we will let them out. What happens beyond our lines? Go at your own risk. That's clear. Here they are fewer, but some people have approached us to ask how they can help us. I have told them clearly that what we hope is that they will understand the justice of our demands.

You may not agree with the path that we have chosen, but you have to understand that the conditions that brought us to this are very cruel and very desperate. If you can understand that, it is a great help to us. If you realize that we have done everything possible to respect your lives, your goods, because the problem is not with you, and if you can also take it into account, because right now the press and the propaganda are saying very much that we are raping, stealing, robbing gasoline stations, looting businesses and many things that you have seen with your own eyes, we have not done here in San Cristo'bal. If anyone would like to go further [applause]... Also, here a person is telling me to make public the guarantees that we give to all civilians regardless of their political affiliation, nationality, race, or creed, that they will not be touched by our forces.

Whenever we can, what I want to say to people that want to go further, if you can give some food or money, it would be welcome. You know that we do not steal. Whoever wants to help us in something more material, they can give us that, food and money. If you cannot or do not want to, it is enough [to] understand why we did this. Then, we will be satisfied.

We will continue towards the regular troops of the Zapatista National Liberation Army and the orders that our leadership gives us to go where they direct us. Now they are sending us to Rancho Nuevo. Well, it will be there. If it is on the other side, then to the other side we'll go. But it should be clear that we are inviting the federal troops to come over to our side. That is all, if you have any question, that is all I can say. Don't worry about your goods or your persons. They will be respected, as will your liberty. In case of problems, we are not going to

take hostages or take anyone by force with us to protect us. In the case that we have to leave, or that we have to fight, that is the guarantee, that we will not take civilians or hostages... [vigorous applause].

We will fight until the fall of the capital of the Republic. My compañeros have said it very clearly in their declaration of war, that their fundamental demands imply the creation of a transitional government that calls for elections, clean, real elections, and for that they are calling for the House of Deputies and the House of Senators to disregard and unseat the illegitimate president, Carlos Salinas de Gortari, and from among them a coalition government of various parties and people of known prestige; a transitional government that would call for clean elections so that the will of the people could win. That is what the compañeros explain. I was ready to talk with anyone but the only thing they have sent is airplanes. That should be clear: We have not denied the dialogue to anyone. There has been no attempt, other than that of the National Human Rights Commission, which did approach us to ask for the free passage of foreigners. All of us are Mexicans. The movement is national, and among our troops that fight here are people who have visited various states of the Republic but mainly the troops that are here are Chiapanecos and mainly Indigenous. We are not requiring the reaching of an accord as a condition for leaving San Cristóbal. We may leave even though there is no accord, according to orders that may tell us to leave and attack another place. We would have to march to other places. In this case Tuxtla, since if the order is that we have to go there, we have nothing to do here. What I want you to understand is our situation here. We have not prohibited any commerce, not the gas stations, not the bus stations, not the mini-buses, not that, nor have we prohibited the radio stations. The only thing we have prohibited is leaving the city because we cannot guarantee that the federal troops will respect you. As for the rest, we have not done anything but get things a bit dirty. That we have done, but we will try to fix that as well, very soon. So we advise with this, then, to the small and medium businesses, that they will not be touched, only the business that is of the federal and state government.

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[Marcos is speaking again.]

M: Let me finish.

Q: Wait a minute.

M: Of course, finish.

Q: Compañeros of Chiapas, Indians, permit me a minute, if you were brought tortillas, water, pozolito, would you accept it?

M: Yes, of course. That is what we are eating. That is the situation. What has to continue is our advance to Mexico City. We started this very day. Today the North American Free Trade Agreement begins, which is nothing more than a death sentence to the Indigenous ethnicities of Mexico, who are perfectly dispensable in the modernization program of Salinas de Gortari. Then the compañeros decided to rise up on that same day to respond to the decree of death that the Free Trade Agreement gives them, with the decree of life that is given by rising up in arms to demand liberty and democracy, which will take them to the solution to their problems. This is the reason that we have risen up today. Any other questions, because they are going to cut me off?

Q: We don't want free trade. What is happening?

M: What I know is nothing more than you know. There were displays of adherence and sympathy in four or five states of the Republic, among them Veracruz, Oaxaca, Puebla and another state in the North that I can't remember. Our organization will also speak on a national level. A column was lost as they entered and then they went in there, they left to look, but we are not going to enter any civilian house. We did not do it when you were sleeping [applause], and won't now that you are awake. I think we did well, because you did not awaken until very late. [applause]