

# Mumia Abu-Jamal / Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos

## ACCION ZAPATISTA

Accion Zapatista (AZ) is an organization that gathers and redistributes information about the Zapatistas and the struggle for democracy in Mexico. We protest US support of the Mexican government, and support local struggles that challenge neo-liberal policies and institutions. Because events in different regions are related by the brutal logic of global capital, we invite your input in developing new strategies of organizing and an ongoing understanding of the interconnections between local and international struggles. AZ maintains a communications network designed to link local struggles <[accion-zapatista@lists.cc.utexas.edu](mailto:accion-zapatista@lists.cc.utexas.edu)>. The AZ network allows individuals and organizations to collaborate with AZ via the internet in order to participate in debate, post important information, request relevant data, present opinions and insights and be informed of upcoming events or actions in the Austin area.

**For more information on the Zapatistas:**

<http://www.utexas.edu/students/nave>

**For more information on Mumia Abul-Jamal:**

<http://www.mumia.org/>

<http://mojo.calyx.net/~refuse/>



*"The fact that I write at all reveals the utter failure of their intimidation tactics — as does the fact that you read."*

*Mumia Abu-Jamal*



## **A death warrant has been signed for Mumia Abu-Jamal, setting an execution date of December 2, 1999!!!**

**PA Governor Signs Mumia Abu Jamal's Death Warrant Despite Expected Habeus Corpus Petition Citing New Evidence of Innocence, Prosecutorial Misconduct, Racial Bias**

**Abu Jamal's Legal Team to File Habeus Corpus Petition Friday, October 15, 1999 At 10:00 a.m. at the Federal District Court in Philadelphia.**

**Press Conference Will Follow at 11:00 a.m. at the American Friends Services Committee, 15th and Cherry Street**

**Rush to Execute Violates Defendant's Basic Legal Rights and Opposes Philadelphia and Pennsylvania Bar Associations' Recent Call for a Moratorium on Executions**

PHILADELPHIA, Oct. 13, 1999 /PRNewswire/ — Governor Ridge of Pennsylvania today signed the death warrant of Mumia Abu Jamal, despite an expected habeus corpus petition from the defendant's lawyers citing: fabrication and suppression of evidence; racial bias in selecting jurors; and denial of the right to self-representation, among other arguments.

This is the 171st death warrant Governor Ridge has signed since 1994 — five times the number signed by his predecessors over a 25-year period. Ninety-nine percent of those warrants signed by Ridge were done while the inmates still had time to appeal.

Aside from not waiting for the habeus corpus petition — a process that all defendants are legally entitled to — Governor Ridge also decided to sign Jamal's warrant despite the Philadelphia and Pennsylvania Bar Associations' recent call for a moratorium on all executions until the death penalty system is proven just.

One of the system's infirmities, acknowledged by the bar associations, has to do with racial prejudice. While nine percent of Pennsylvania's total population is African-American, for example, the percentage on death row is nearly seven times that amount (62%). This is the largest racial disparity of any state in the United States.

---

## **STOP THE WTO!**

**SHUTDOWN SEATTLE!!! Nov 1 -Dec 3 1999**

<http://www.seattlewto.org/>

The WTO is a truly frightening institution, yet within its abominations lie a tremendous opportunity to educate people about the dangers of a political and economic system so tightly intertwined that it threatens the life of our planet. So what can we do about it? There is no easy answer. There is no quick fix. The WTO cannot be reformed, and we cannot trust to our "representatives: to remedy the situation. We must look to each other to break the cycle of capital domination and to devise a new society that values life over profit. We can begin by waking each other up to the needs of securing decision making power in the hands of the people. We must create revolutionary institutions wherever we find opportunity: institutions that foster the decentralized, non-hierarchical distribution of power and cooperation. For Seattle at the end of November, lets show the WTO that we are not falling for their brand of "democracy".

### **Websites about the WTO**

Seattle Citizen's Committee: <http://www.seattlewto.org>

People for Fair Trade: <http://www.peopleforfairtrade.org>

Art and Revolution: <http://www.agitprop.org/artandrevolution>

"<http://www.agitprop.org/artandrevolution>

Peoples Global Action <http://www.agp.org>

Globalize This <http://www.globalizethis.org>

Global Exchange: <http://www.globalexchange.org/economy/rulemakers/wto.html>

No2WTO email list: <http://no2wto.listbot.com>

Citizen's Guide to the WTO(200k)

<http://www.globalizethis.org/pdf/wto-book.pdf>

Alternative Media Sites:

Download and Upload audio, video and text: <http://www.rewire.org>

The state then asked for 90 days to respond, but the judge gave them only 60 days to submit a reply (which would be by February 11). Then Len Weinglass asked for 30 days to file a short rejoined to the state's reply, and he was given 20 days and a limit of 20 pages (this would be due on March 2). After the judge gets all these papers, he will then set a date for the first major court appearance, at which time Mumia will be present. Thus Mumia's first court appearance could be in early March, but could be later depending on the judge's calendar and case load.

Weinglass raised the issues of discovery (an order from the court to the state to produce key documents) and an evidentiary hearing (where witnesses would be questioned). The judge indicated that the 1996 Effective Death Penalty Act made an evidentiary hearing unlikely, but he told Weinglass to put his argument for such a hearing in his Dec. 7 filing. In response to the judge's questions, Weinglass indicated that were 10 to 15 (of the 29 issues raised) on which he would like to present evidence, and he thought it would take two or three weeks to do so. (If the judge denies an evidentiary hearing, he will be in the position of condemning Mumia without even hearing from him.)

After Judge Yohn rules of some of the procedural points (perhaps in March), such as discovery and an evidentiary hearing, there is expected to be another round of legal briefs, followed by oral arguments. Several other issues came up. First, the judge asked if Mumia's attorneys were aware that the state could "depose" Mumia. (They did know this.) Since a petition of habeas corpus is a civil action, the "respondents" (those named in Mumia's petition as holding him illegally) are allowed to take a deposition, that is, question Mumia under oath. (Mumia can have his attorneys present if this happens.) The judge indicated that Mumia will be present for all hearings in his court, and he asked Mumia's attorneys if they had any concern about Mumia's safety. Weinglass raised the issue that Sabo had allowed large numbers of armed police in the courtroom. Judge Yohn said that there would be no armed cops as spectators in his courtroom.

The judge also brought up the issue of the letters he has been receiving. Weinglass asked if he had been receiving mail from both sides, and he replied "No, only for a new trial." He indicated that he didn't think it would be correct for him to read them, and asked if Weinglass would accept them (which he agreed to do). Later the judge mentioned that he had received a very few letters opposing a new trial, and he would give these to the state. Weinglass has already received over 500 letters directly from the public, and he indicates that some of them are very moving and should be printed.

We cannot draw any definitive conclusions about this judge from this one short encounter. A great range of this possibilities exist, from a worst case scenario of no evidentiary hearing and a quick summary judgment against Mumia; to a hearing with unknown results; to a summary judgment (without a hearing) in Mumia's favor. The main thing we learned was the schedule of events for the next few months. This does not mean that people can now "relax." We are now on the federal fast track, and every day counts in building the movement to save and win a new trial for Mumia Abu-Jamal.

---

Kissinger's column is from **Commentaries of ZNet** and are a premium sent to Sustainer Donors. To learn more about the project consult ZNet <<http://www.zmag.org>> and specifically the Sustainer Pages <<http://www.zmag.org/Commentaries/donorform.htm>>.

In addition, a 1998 study by Professor Baldus at the University of Iowa found that a young African-American man growing up in Philadelphia is 11.5 times more likely to end up on death row than in Georgia or Alabama.

"Ridge is rushing to execute before all the evidence has been presented," said Leonard Weinglass, Jamal's lead attorney. "Since when does one man's political motivations override another's right to a fair trial, especially when a human life is in question?"

Since the death penalty was reinstated in 1976, 81 people have been exonerated. Rushing executions assures that people who are on death row as a result of errors in process or issues of actual innocence will not be saved through the appellate process.

The habeas corpus petition, which Governor Ridge knew was being filed for federal review, contains more than 29 separate issues of Constitutional violations that occurred in Jamal's trial and appeal. It is more than 150 pages, and contains more than 600 paragraphs of factual allegations pertinent to the case.

"Several arguments will be raised in the petition demonstrating that Jamal never received a meaningful trial and that compelling evidence of innocence was ignored by the state courts of Pennsylvania," said Daniel Williams, co-counsel.

"Above and beyond the issue of innocence — which is paramount in this case — are the transcendent issues of whether or not in the 1990's someone ought to be executed when the trial attorney admits he interviewed no witnesses and conducted no investigation; when 11 African-American jurors were removed on the basis of race; and when the prosecution wrongly used a teenager's political statements to give the death penalty to an adult 12 years later," said Weinglass.

In addition to the defending attorneys, those working to ensure a fair trial for Jamal include: Amnesty International, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the European Parliament, Reverend Jesse Jackson and many others.

SOURCE: Leonard Weinglass, Esq.

## **Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos to Mumia Abu-Jamal**

For: Mumia Abu-Jamal  
American Union  
From: Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos  
Mexico

Mister Mumia:

I am writing to you in the name of the men, women, children and elderly of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation in order to congratulate you on April 24, which is your birthday.

Perhaps you have heard of us. We are Mexican, mostly indigenous, and we took up arms on January 1 of 1994 demanding a voice, face and name for the forgotten of the earth.

Since then, the Mexican government has made war on us and pursues us and harasses us seeking our death, our disappearance and our definitive silence. The reason? These lands are rich with oil, uranium and precious lumber. The government wants them for the great transnational companies. We want them for all the Mexicans. The government sees our lands as a business. We see our history written in these lands. In order to defend our right (and that of all Mexicans) to live with liberty, democracy, justice and dignity we became an army and undertook a name, voice and face that way.

Perhaps you wonder how we know of you, about your birthday, and why it is that we extend this long bridge which goes from the mountains of the Mexican southeast to the prison of Pennsylvania which has imprisoned you unjustly. Many good people from many parts of the world have spoken of you, through them we have learned how you were ambushed by the North American police in December of 1981, of the lies which they constructed in the procedures against you, and of the death sentence in 1982. We learned about your birthday through the international mobilizations which, under the name of "Millions for Mumia," are being prepared this April 24th.

It is harder to explain this bridge which this letter extends, it is more complicated. I could tell you that, for the powerful of Mexico and the government, to be indigenous, or to look indigenous, is reason for disdain, abhorrence, distrust and hatred. The racism which now floods the palaces of Power in Mexico goes to the extreme of carrying out a war of extermination, genocide, against millions of indigenous. I am sure that you will find similarities

to which human beings can resort: the death penalty, to punish someone they consider different, someone who struggles for a more just society.

We call on the civil society of the State of Pennsylvania, on civil society of the United States, on civil society of the entire world, to reject this barbarism; we call on the good men and women who inhabit this earth to stop the execution of Mumia. Because if Mumia Abu-Jamal dies, human dignity will once more be defeated. We will not allow it!, *compañeros* and brothers.

We demand justice from the Governor of Pennsylvania and the United States legal system! The world is watching them. They have a new opportunity to demonstrate that justice can prevail. Would that they make use of this opportunity, and go down in history as good men, and not as assassins.

Abolish the death penalty! Liberty for Mumia Abu-Jamal, now!

Javier Elorriaga, of the National Coordinating Committee of the FZLN  
Maria and Ulises Martinez of the International Committee of the FZLN

### **Update on the Stay of Execution by Clark Kissinger**

Mumia's legal team and the attorneys for the state of Pennsylvania were asked to a meeting on Tuesday morning with federal judge William Yohn in his chambers to "get acquainted." This was expected and is usually the way a major case like this begins. When they arrived at 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday, they were conducted into the courtroom where Judge Yohn took the bench and went on the record. This was totally unexpected since the defense team had not even filed the necessary papers to allow them to appear in the federal district court for Eastern Pennsylvania (they are from another federal court district).

There was no one else present in the courtroom except a Philadelphia Inquirer court reporter. This is when Judge Yohn announced that he was granting the stay of execution, although he did not sign it on the spot. [A number of people have asked if the stay is "permanent" or "temporary." Such a stay is a temporary order, preventing the execution until the judge can consider the petition to have Mumia's original conviction overturned. Once the case is ruled on by the judge, the stay will be "vacated" (ended)]. The judge asked where the trial record was, and the state said that they would bring it in for him.

Since the petition submitted by Mumia's lawyers on October 16 contained only the arguments regarding facts, the judge ordered them to submit a memorandum of law citing the relevant legal precedents for the requests they have made in their petition for a writ of habeas corpus. This is to be submitted by December 7.

and dehumanization.

Authorization is when persons in power order or allow atrocities to occur in furtherance of political ends. Routinization is the internal process by which those authorized make it “okay” to do what is an obvious evil, like slaughtering babies. Dehumanization is the social and ideological process by which a people are projected, perceived, and then treated as somehow less than human. In each of the historical instances noted above, we have seen these diabolical features at work.

It happened in America, where the declaration of independence wrote of “merciless Indian savages” and where children learned the phrase, “the only good Indian is a dead Indian” at an early age. Such a mindset made Wounded Knee an historic inevitability. These same features were found in the Chiapas area where minions of the state attacked the most powerless and the most maligned segment of Mexican society: Indians, the indigenous peoples.

For centuries they, as well as Africans, have been subjected to dehumanization, where, as in Chiapas they were not seen as full human beings, with inherent rights, but as tools used in the “dirty war” of the government against the Zapatistas.

“How many more?,” Marcos asked. “Until when?,” he wonders. The true shame is that we cannot say.

### **Declaration Of The Zapatista Front Of National Liberation (Fzln), Concerning Mumia Abu-Jamal’s Sentence**

What sense does it make to kill in order to prove that killing is wrong? What sense does it make to try to settle one inhuman act with another? But when, in addition, when they blame and try to “legally assassinate” an innocent man, for the mere fact of his having been born black, for being honorable, because the elections in the State of Pennsylvania require their quota of blood — what sense is there in what is hypocritically called justice in the States?

Our *compañero* and brother Mumia Abu-Jamal, known for his criticism of violence and racism, is denied the possibility of a new trial, which would allow him the possibility to demonstrate what, day after day, for 16 years, has become more and more evident: his lack of guilt.

with what the Power in the United States does with the so-called “people of color” (African-American, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, Asians, North American Indians and any other peoples who do not have the insipid color of money.)

We are also “people of color” (the same color of our brothers who have Mexican blood and live and struggle in the American Union). We are of the color “brown”, the color of the earth, the color from which we take our history, our strength, our wisdom and our hope. But in order to struggle we add another color to the brown: black. We use black ski-masks to show our faces. Only in this way can we be seen and heard. We chose this color as a result of the counsel of an indigenous Mayan elder who explained to us what the color black meant.

The name of this wise elder was Old Man Antonio. He died in these rebel Zapatista lands in March of 1994, victim of tuberculosis which ate his lungs and his breath. Old Man Antonio used to tell us that from black came the light and from there came the stars that light up the sky around the world. He told us a story that said that a long time ago (in those times when no one measured it), the first gods were given the task of giving birth to the world. In one of their meetings they saw it was necessary that the world have life and movement, and for this light was necessary. Then they thought of making the sun in order that the days move and so there would be day and night and time for struggling and time for making love, walking with the days and nights the world would go. The gods had their meeting and made this agreement in front of a large fire, and they knew it was necessary that one of them be sacrificed by throwing himself into the fire in order to become fire himself and fly into the sky. The gods thought that the work of the sun was the most important, so they chose the most beautiful god so that he would fly into the fire and become the sun. But he was afraid. Then the smallest god, the one who was black, said he was not afraid and he threw himself into the fire and became sun. Then the world had light and movement, and there was time for struggle and time for love, and in the day the bodies worked to make the world and in the night the bodies made love and sparkles filled the darkness.

This is what Old Man Antonio told us and that is why we use a black ski mask. So we are of the color brown and of the color black. But we are also of the color yellow, because the first people who walked these lands were made of corn so they would be true. And we are also red because this is the call of blood that has dignity and we are also blue because we are the sky in which we fly, and green for the mountain which is our house and our strength. And we are white because we are paper so that tomorrow can write its story.

So we are 7 colors because there were 7 first gods who birthed the world.

This is what Old Man Antonio said long ago and now I tell you this story so that you may understand the reason for this bridge of paper and ink that I send to you all the way from the mountains of the Mexican Southeast.

And also so that you may understand that with this bridge goes pieces of salutes and hugs for Leonard Peltier (who is in the prison at Leavenworth, Kansas), and for the more than 100 political prisoners in the USA who are the victims of injustice, stupidity and authoritarianism.

And with this letter-bridge walks as well a salute to the Dine (the Navajo), who, in Big Mountain, Arizona, fight against the violations of their traditional Dine religious practices. They struggle against those who prefer the large businesses instead of respect for the religious freedom of Indian peoples, and those who want to destroy sacred grounds and ceremonial sites (as is the case of Peabody Western Coal Company which wants to take lands without reason, history or rights — lands which belong to the Dine and their future generations.)

But there are not only stories of resistance against North American injustice in this letter-bridge. There are the indigenous, from the extreme south of our continent, in Chile, the Mapuche women in the Pewenche Center of Alto Bio-Bio who resist against stupidity. Two indigenous women, Bertha and Nicolasa Quintreman are accused of “mistreating” members of the armed forces of the Chilean government. So there it is. An armed military unit with rifles, sticks, and tear-gas, protected by bulletproof vests, helmets and shields, accuse two indigenous women of “mistreatment.” But Bertha is 74 years old and Nicolasa is 60. How is it possible that two elderly people confronted a “heroic” group of heavily-armed military? Because they are Mapuche. The story is the same as that of the brothers and sisters Dine of Arizona, and the same which repeats itself in all America: a company (ENDESA) wants the lands of the Mapuches, and in spite of the law which protects the indigenous, the government is on the side of the companies. The Mapuche students have pointed out that the government and the company made a “study” of military intelligence about the indigenous Mapuche communities and they came to the conclusion that the Mapuche could not think, defend themselves, resist, or construct a better future. The study was wrong apparently.

Now it occurs to me that, perhaps the powerful in North America carried out a “military intelligence” study (this is frankly a contradiction, because those of us who are military are not intelligent, if we were we would not be military) about the case of the Dine in Arizona, about Leonard Peltier, about other political prisoners, about yourself, mister Mumia.

## **WHAT MADE THE ACTEAL MASSACRE POSSIBLE?**

**Mumia Abu-Jamal**

“Brothers and Sisters; Why? How many more? Until when?”  
Subcomandante Marcos Zapatista Army; Dec. ‘97

The brutal, premeditated massacre of at least 45 indigenous poor men, women and children several days before Christmas, 1997, by armed paramilitaries of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) sent shock waves through the international community.

In a slaughter of the innocent that took over four hours in duration, the so-called PRIistas revealed their malevolent intent, to attack and disable the indigenous (Indian) support network for the Zapatista Army. Thus, the ruthless killing of 45 civilians had a clear political objective, one verbalized by the “Red Mask” paramilitaries as, “We are going to put an end to the Zapatista seed” (Nuevo Amanecer Press, 12/26/97). Seen in this light, the 45 men, women and children of San Pedro de Chenalhó were but a means to a dastardly end.

How, one wonders, can such a thing happen? Until we address this question how can we begin to answer those posed above?

For over 50 years, especially after the Nazi period in Europe, psychologists have studied this destructive type of phenomena.

Some, like the famous Milgram Studies (of 1963) taught us of the limits of “destructive obedience,” where so-called “normal” people shocked innocent others up to 450 volts, up to levels reading “DANGER: SEVERE SHOCK,” only because authority figures told them to do so, with 65% obeying to the end (other Milgram Studies found over 90% compliance).

Scholars H.C. Kelman and V.L. Hamilton have advanced the notion of “sanctioned massacres,” no stranger to American or world history: “within American history, My Lai had its precursors in the Philippine war around the turn of the century...and in the massacres of American Indians...[O]ne recalls the Nazi’s “final solution” for European Jews, the massacres and deportations of Armenians by Turks, the liquidation of the Kulaks and the great purges in the Soviet Union, and more recently the massacre in Indonesia and Bangladesh, in Biafra and Burundi, in South Africa and Mozambique, in Cambodia and Afghanistan, in Syria and Lebanon. (Political Psychology, by N.J. Kressel, p.223). In many of those cases, we find the “sanctioning” of heinous massacres by authorization, routinization



It is the silent acquiescence of millions that supports the system. When you don't oppose a system, your silence becomes approval, for it does nothing to interrupt the system...Many people say that it is insane to resist the system, but actually it is insane not to"  
—Mumia Abu-Jamal

Perhaps they made this study and came to the conclusion that they might be able to violate justice and reason, to assault history and lose the truth. They thought they could do this and no one would say anything. The Dine Indians would stand by and watch the destruction of the most sacred of their history, Leonard Peltier would be alone, and you, Mister Mumia, would be silenced (and I remember your own words: "They not only want my death, they want my silence").

But the studies were wrong. Happy mistake? The Dine resist against those who would kill their memory, Leonard Peltier is accompanied by all those who demand his liberty, and you sir, speak and yell today with all the voices which celebrate your birthday as all birthdays should be celebrated, by struggling.

Mister Mumia:

We have nothing big to give you as a gift for your birthday, it is poor and little, but all of us send you an embrace.

We hope that when you gain your freedom you will come to visit us. Then we will give you a birthday party, even if it isn't April 24th, it will be an un-birthday party.

There will be musicians, dancing and speaking, which are the means by which men and women of all colors understand and know one another, and build bridges over which they walk together, towards history, towards tomorrow.

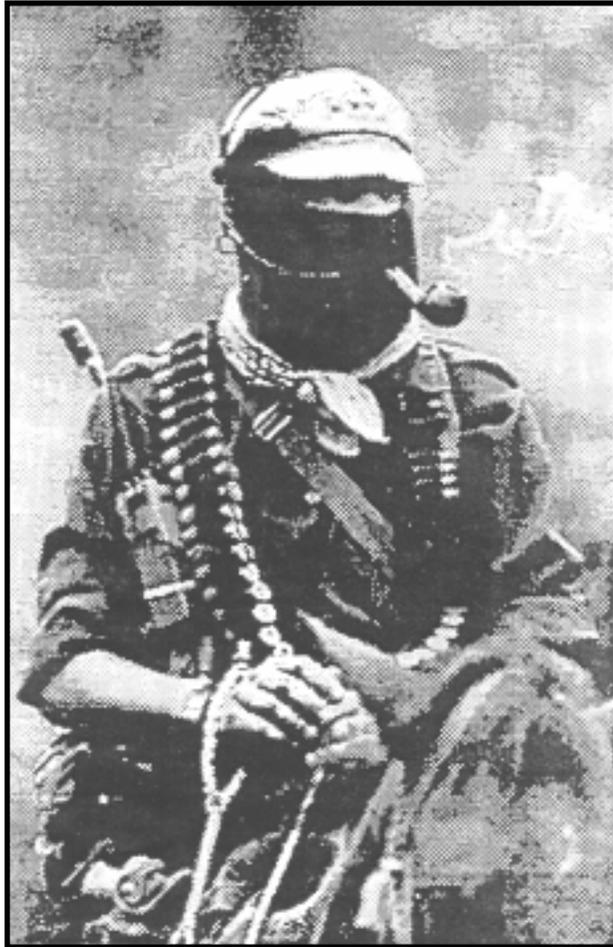
Happy Birthday!

*Vale.* We salute you and may justice and truth find their place.

From the mountains of the Mexican Southeast,  
Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos  
Mexico, April of 1999

P.S. I read somewhere that you are a father and a grandfather. So I am sending you a gift for your children and grandchildren. It is a little wooden car with Zapatistas dressed in black ski-masks.

Tell your children and grandchildren that it is a gift that we send you, the Zapatistas. Explain to them that there are places with people of all colors everywhere, just like you, who want justice, liberty and democracy.



Chiapan Highlands, under PRI guns.

In a December 12th, 1997, communiqué, Zapatista Subcommander Marcos wrote of the repression waged against the indigenous people, especially local (Chenalnó) Zapatista activists:

*The state and federal governments and the Institutional Revolutionary Party, far from stopping their wave of aggressions, are trying to avoid solving the main problem of Chenalnó, which is the eradication of their paramilitary groups and the return of the displaced people to their communities. While it pretends to establish a dialogue, Chiapanecan PRI followers are undertaking the plunder and destruction of the evicted's property. Coffee, cattle, clothes, and domestic utensils are being distributed among the paramilitary as the bounty of a war which, up until now, has only seen shooting coming from one of the sides, that is the government and its political party. (NAP:amanecer@aa.net 12/16/97)*

These paramilitary groups, whose war cry was “An end to the Zapatista seed” have waged an insidious campaign against Indian communities in the Southeast, of theft, robbery, brutality, rape, arson, murders and then, mass murders.

Subcommander Marcos’ warning (of Dec. 12th, 1997) was all but ignored, and ten days later (on Dec, 22nd, 1997) Chiapas was marked by an unholy massacre. According to Subcommander Marcos, “The direct responsibility for these bloody events fall upon Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de Leon and the Justice Ministry, who, two days ago, gave a green light to the counterinsurgency project presented by the Federal Army.” (NCDM: [moonlight@igc.apc.org](mailto:moonlight@igc.apc.org) 12/15/97).

Nine men, 21 women and 15 children – These people, nameless, invisible, and dead, could very well be alive if the warnings had been heeded. But they were Indians. Indigenous people, Indigenes.

What if 45 whites were killed in a four hour long paramilitary massacre? Their faces, their names, their lives, and their loves would be daily fare of newspapers, magazines and television. But they weren’t white. They were red. And just as the Zapatista warnings were ignored the brutal lives and deaths at the hands of the PRIistas are fast on the way of being forgotten. UNTIL NEXT TIME.

*The voice that arms itself to be heard, the face that hides itself to be seen, the name that hides itself to be named, the red star that calls out to humanity around the world to be heard., to be seen, to be named. The tomorrow that is harvested in the past. [from. Dark Night field notes, #8, P O Box 3629, Chicago, IL 60690-3629, for reprints of Zapatista documents; p. 34.]*

Named after the 'Indian' Revolutionary, Emiliano Zapata (1879-1919), whose forces fought against the Spanish dictator, Porfirio Diaz, under the slogan, "Tierra y Libertad" (Land and Liberty), the Zapatistas draw their strength, their imagery, and their vision from the most oppressed segments of Mexican life, the indigenous, the conquered ones who have sustained themselves in the face of over 500 years of conquest.

That they exist is something of a miracle, and they bring something to life's table that is wonderful.

### **MEXICAN MASSACRE IN ACTEAL: HOW MANY MORE?**

**Mumia Abu-Jamal**

In a vicious attack that lasted up to four hours at least 45 of Mexico's indigenous people (men, women and children) were massacred in the county of San Pedro de Chenalnó, in Chiapas State, several days before Christmas, 1997. New accounts were generally sketchy, and rarely tried to make sense of the evil, savage event.

The names of over two score dead were not worthy of reporting, and the fleeting references to the Zapatista Rebel Army (EZLN) only left many in a ball of confusion.

One hears of this long, drawn-out premeditated massacre, and wonders: Why? If the reader is at all like the writer, s/he saw or heard nothing at all like an explanation for this planned explosion of death. The writer had to turn to the informative alternative to the establishment press, which, in this instance, meant the Nuevo Amanecer Press, which offered what the establishment media could not – context.

N.A.P, noted, in a communiqué issued weeks before the massacre by the Zapatista Central Command, that the indigenous people have been suffering for months at the hands of paramilitary bands and state police, under the auspices and protection of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). Indeed, the area of the massacre, San Pedro de Chenalnó, was a place where thousands of Indians were congregated, poor, ragged, hungry and ill, refugees from villages in the

### **Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos writes to Tom Ridge, Governor of Pennsylvania**

Zapatista Army of National Liberation  
April of 1999  
For: The Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, USA.  
Mister Tom Ridge, governor of Pennsylvania  
United States of North America

From : Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos  
Mexico

Gentlemen Magistrate and Governor:

I write to you in the name of the men, women, children and elderly of the EZLN. Most of us are indigenous Mexicans and we struggle for liberty, democracy and justice.

The purpose of the following letter is to demand justice in the case of Mister Mumia Abu-Jamal, condemned unjustly to the death penalty in 1982. As you know, the judicial process against Mister Mumia Abu-Jamal was plagued with lies and irregularities: the police who accuse him lied about a supposed confession of his, one of the witnesses has changed testimony and declared that he was forced to lie or face prison, the ballistic evidence has proved it was impossible that Mister Mumia Abu-Jamal fired the weapon which killed the policeman. This should be enough evidence for a new trial, but even this recourse has been denied to Mister Mumia Abu-Jamal. If the Judicial system of Pennsylvania and the governor are certain of the guilt of Mister Mumia Abu-Jamal, they should not fear a new trial that adheres to the truth.

I do not ask clemency, pardon, nor mercy of you for Mister Mumia Abu-Jamal. I demand justice, something which I believe is within your powers. No one within the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania or governor Tom Ridge has anything to lose. A new trial can bring the truth forward, and justice, supposedly, is all that should matter.

That is all.

From the mountains of the Mexican Southeast  
Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos  
Mexico, April of 1999

## ZAPATISTA DREAMS

Mumia Abu-Jamal

Over 500 years after European conquest of the Americas, the native, indigenous peoples (that is, their few surviving descendants) still live on the margins of society, and are the poorest of the poor, the sickest of the sick, the people most dispossessed of so-called “New World” populations.

Many of us forget that so-called “Indians,” not Africans, were the first slaves of the Americas, pressed into service by Admiral Cristobal Colon (known to the Americans as Christopher Columbus) and crew to dig for gold, and if felt they were unproductive, their hands were chopped off. This Columbian injustice was the opening which brought genocide to untold millions of natives, and transformed an ancient, “Indian” world into a “New,” white one. Thus, every country in this hemisphere, Canada, United States, Mexico, rests upon the shattered bones of native genocide, and may be seen as New Europe (Canada=New Britain and New France; US=New England, New France; Mexico=New Spain) for the mass importation of Europeans, the decimation of natives, and the forced captivity and enslavement of Africans.

In the southernmost “kneecap” of Mexico, in Chiapas State, an indigenous revolutionary movement is growing, energized by the Mayan and “Indian” poor, who are injecting a remarkable vitality into the revolutionary tradition. In July - August 1996, the Zapatistas convened the First International Meeting for Humanity and Against Neoliberalism (called The Encuentro, or The Encounter) in Chiapas. In their opening remarks one finds the emergence of something deeply moving in its vision and poignant in its poetic power.

Please share it with us:

*Let us introduce ourselves.*

*We are the Zapatista National Liberation Army. For ten years we lived in these mountains, preparing to fight a war. In these mountains we built an army. Below, in the cities and plantations, we did not exist. Our lives were worth less than those of machines or animals. We were like stones, like weeds in the road.*

*We were silenced. We were faceless. We were nameless. We had no future.*

*We did not exist.*

*To the powers that be, known internationally by the term “Neoliberalism,” we did not count, we did not produce, we did not buy, we did not sell. We were a cipher in the accounts of big capital. Then we went to the mountains [of southeastern Mexico] to find ourselves and see if we could ease the pain of being forgotten stones and weeds. Here, in the mountains of southeastern Mexico, our dead live on.*

*Our dead, who live in the mountains, know many things. They speak to us of their death, and we hear them. Coffins speak and tell us another story that comes from yesterday and points toward tomorrow. The mountains spoke to us, the Macehualob, the common and ordinary people.*

*We are simple people, as the powerful tell us.*

*Every day and the next night, the powerful want us to dance the X-tol [a “conquest dance” reenacting the struggle between the Christian and Moor, with the latter representing the conquered indigenous folk] and repeat their brutal conquest.*

*The Kaz-Dzul, [half-foreigner, or Mestizo, Ladino] the false man, rules our lands and has giant war machines, like the Boob, [forest demon] half-puma and half-horse, that spread pain and death among us.*

*The trickster government sends us the Aluxob, [a small forest spirit, a trickster] the liars who fool our people and make them forgetful. This is why we became soldiers.*

*This is why we remain soldiers:*

*Because we want no more death and trickery for our people, because we want no more forgetting.*

*The mountains told us to take up arms so we would have a voice, It told us to cover our faces so we would have a face.*

*It told us to forget our names so we could be named.*

*It told us to protect our past so we would have a future.*

*This is who we are. The Zapatista National Liberation Army.*