

Subcomandante Warns Of Fraud in Mexico's Election

The **Subcomandante Galeano**, aka Marcos, the most well-known spokesperson of the **Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN)**, said that the **Capitalist Hydra** won't allow any **left-wing reformist governments in Latin America**, and warned about the next possible **electoral fraud in Mexico** and the rise of the right in the region.

The occasion was the Zapatista *Cycle of Conferences* being held at the **Integral Education Indigenous Center -Earth University**, located at **San Cristobal de las Casas** in the southern Mexican state of **Chiapas**. The Center is the usual scene of the Zapatista-organized conferences and congresses, to which they invite intellectuals, social organizations, scientists and activists to speak. This time, the public has also been encouraged to participate, as Galeano, who acts as the moderator, invites them to come to the front and take the microphone.

Speaking at the first day of the *Cycle of Conferences* titled **"Looks, Listens, Words, Thinking Forbidden?"** Galeano warned that the institutional left in Mexico *"is so drunk celebrating a victory that it still doesn't have in hand, that it doesn't realize where the fraud is coming from and doesn't have a plan B."*

Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador is the candidate for the left-right wing coalition **"Together We'll Make History,"** and is currently the favorite by a wide margin. The last poll published by the daily *Reforma* favors Lopez Obrador by 48 percent, while the right-wing Ricardo Anaya is far behind with 26 percent. Other polls don't give such a generous margin, but most are certain that at this point, after running in three presidential campaigns and offering a popular disdain for the traditional mainstream parties, Lopez Obrador is unbeatable. But Galeano disagrees. As right-wing governments in Latin America are on the rise and the most progressive ones are under heavy international pressure or have been victims of coups, the EZLN spokesperson thinks Mexicans won't have it that easy.

Galeano said in his firm, slow voice that the Zapatistas wanted *"neither reform nor revolution, but survival, resistance and rebellion,"* because *"capitalism is going all out for everything and won't allow any Lulas, nor Dilmias, Kirchners or Correias, nor Evos nor Lopez Obradors, nor whatever name is offering to take a breath."*

"The institutional left is taking victory for granted, even though in order to achieve such a wide advantage, Lopez Obrador has to please both the general public and the economic elite of the country, promising investors that their money will be safe. We say that now that the hydra is running crazy, it is going for everything and everyone. Those are the reflections, what I understand out of all this, because that is what our friends, brothers and sisters from the networks are facing, and they say 'well, if they're offering us a breath we



should take it,' but others say no, that we need to go all-in. And what we say is that taking that breath won't be possible because the ruling class won't allow it. And it's one thing preparing for taking that breath and another preparing for a bloody, sadist, fierce persecution beyond any logic we've ever seen."

Maria de Jesus Patricio Martinez, the **Indigenous Government Council** spokeswoman backed by the EZLN for the Presidency was also present at the event. Martinez, also known as Marichuy, managed to get 281, 955 signatures in her support, relying on volunteers to get them, out of which more than 90 percent were validated by the electoral authorities as legitimate. However, she didn't get the almost 900,000 signatures needed to become an official independent presidential candidate. Other independent candidates, with far greater resources, managed to reach the goal and will be in the ballots, even though the electoral authorities declared most of their signatures fake.

"Mexico has been kidnapped by a few. We have a lot to do together, this doesn't end just because we didn't get the signatures," Martinez/Marichuy said. *"We need to come back and get involved in the bottom-up organization, with our own ways, manners and times, but we can't just remain seated thinking that we didn't make it... there's a lot to do for Mexico."*

Along with delegates of the Indigenous Government Council, Marichuy traveled all across Mexico visiting communities in resistance, listening to their problems and their experience in their struggles. *"We listened and saw that the pains in Mexico are all alike among each other, and they're similar because there's a strategy of destruction, of sacking, of control,"* said Marichuy.

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'ALL ABOARD FOR GAZA'

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They wounded over 50 more on the *Mavi Marmara*. Every one of our boats, including two cargo ships was boarded forcefully. People were tasered, they were beaten up, windows blown out with percussion grenades. And then we were all arrested, taken against our will to a country we didn't want to go to, Israel, and put in prison, then deported with a 10 year deportation so that now we cannot go into Israel, therefore we cannot go into the West Bank. They keep the boats, they steal the boats and this is larceny on the high seas. This is piracy, what they have been doing is piracy.

It's a horrific situation. The statistics are that half the kids in Gaza are having emotional problems—I would say it would be like 95% of the kids in Gaza—because of the horrific oppression that every single day you don't know whether your house is going to be blown up, or if you have a car it's going to be blown up, or what's going to happen. Because you hear these assassin drones above you. I've been there several times, like eight times, and you hear this

hum-mmm-mmm-mmm. And you may not even be able to see it up above you, but you can hear this thing, and then all of a sudden, a flash, and that Hellfire rocket comes down and blows up a building.

And in our campaigns over the years, several of them have been named "Stay Human." You stay human as an international thing; I see what's happening and my humanity says I have to speak out. I have to do *something* to bring world attention to what's happening to the Palestinians. And for the Palestinians to be non-violent in the face of the violence against them.

Of course, there are some militant groups that have fired rockets into Israel, that's for sure. But look at the massive, massive Israeli military forces used against essentially an unarmed civilian population, how the Israelis kill at will, and are trying, as your earlier speaker said, trying to get the conditions so bad that people will be forced to leave because they cannot have any clean water, they can't have clean air. The concentration of fecal material in the air in Gaza is one of the highest in the world because the sewage plant is always the first facility that Israel goes after and blows

up. And then they won't let spare parts come in to get it fixed. So, raw sewage is everywhere, and it dries, so the fecal material is in the air.

And then the waters where fishermen, to try to get some protein for the people of Gaza, are forced to stay within, it varies from three to five miles offshore, having to fish in this polluted water because the Israelis have boats out there that blow them up, killing the fishermen if they come out any further to try to get in cleaner water. The Israeli government is really conducting slow genocide on the people of Gaza.

The Freedom Flotilla is visiting Europe all through May. If you go online, we have a Facebook 2018 Gaza Freedom Flotilla, US Section.. Or if you go on NationBuilder, 2018 Gaza Flotilla, to make monetary contributions. And if you happen to be in Europe soon and want to help out and be on a ground crew and even possibly on one of the legs of this massive voyage, get in touch with us through NationBuilder and we'll talk to you about perhaps helping us out in Europe.

Ann Wright The complete interview from michaelslate.com.

BILLIONAIRE'S PROXIES KILL ELEVEN

A court in India on May 23rd ordered a stop to the expansion of a copper plant in the southern city of Tuticorin, a day after police killed 11 protesters while thousands of protesters were attempting to march to the offices of the District Collector, a top local official. Indian news reports quoted witnesses as saying that police officers did not fire warning shots and aimed at demonstrators' chests. In a video aired by Tamil-language news channels, at least one police officer is seen climbing atop a van to shoot at the crowd, while a voice off-camera is heard saying: "At least one should die."

The state's chief minister, E. Palanisamy, also on May 23rd transferred the District Collector and the Police Superintendent in Tuticorin to other posts outside the city. He had earlier ordered a judicial inquiry into what happened during May 22nd demonstration, one of the deadliest police crackdowns on a protest in India in recent years.

The Sterlite copper plant — part of the London-based metals company Vedanta — has been accused of flouting environmental regulations and polluting air and water in the port city of Tuticorin, in Tamil Nadu state. The chairman of Vedanta Group, Anil Agarwal, who lives in London, is one of the richest Indian businessmen with an estimated net worth of \$3.3 billion.

Environmental groups have long accused the copper smelter, which opened in 1997, of polluting air and water. After workers choked and fainted, reportedly from fumes at the plant, a court closed the factory in 1998 and cited it for

failing to comply with regulations against contaminating groundwater. But authorities allowed the facility to reopen soon afterward.

In 2004, a Supreme Court monitoring committee found that the plant did not have adequate disposal facilities for arsenic-containing waste and was emitting levels of toxic sulfur dioxide gas. Residents in the area blame the plant for high incidences of cancer. The plant was shut down again in 2010 over environmental concerns, but won a reprieve from a higher court. In 2013, a massive gas leak from the plant sickened several hundred residents in the area, some of whom blamed the leak for causing miscarriages and skin and respiratory ailments. India's Supreme Court in 2013 fined the plant more than \$14 million for pollution, but it was allowed to continue to operate.

"Every household has a cancer patient," explained activist Fatima Bhabhu. "Juvenile cancer is prevalent. Children ages 6 and 8 are dying. It is too much to bear for the residents. It is normal for them to be emotionally charged and angry during the protests."

The interim order by the Madras High Court blocks the plan to double the size of the smelter to 800,000 tons, which opponents say would make it the world's largest such facility in an urban area.

- Parth M.N.

a special correspondent to the L.A. Times