

## "ZAPATISTA" FROM FIFTH PAGE

the vote. Then, the PAN candidate Calderon announced that he, in fact, had seen the government's results, and they indicated his victory. Lopez Obrador, sloppily slouched over a podium in his famous style, produced significant documentation of fraud at a conference the next day. Among other things, he suggested, printouts from the government results showed a decline in total votes for his PRD party throughout the day, even as more polling stations reported in. Results posted outside neighborhood voting sites did not match those validated by the elections agency, whose computers were initially found to contain some 200,000 votes for Lopez Obrador in a hidden file. Several days later, 1,000,000 PRD ballots were reportedly recovered from a Mexico-city dump. The message was clear: we, the political class of Mexico, with our corporate allies from abroad, will only tolerate so much democracy.

Days after the initial fiasco, I watched as a crowd of several tens of thousands of PRD supporters jammed Mexico City's central plaza. Opposition politicians had played to fears that Lopez Obrador, who had spent the last months of his campaign catering to foreign banks and adopting a suit-and-tie, might call for disruptive demonstrations, but he declined. Still embattled in a legal appeals process that must end by Sept. 6th, it is possible that he is following in the footsteps of another Mexican politician, Cuauhtemoc Cardenas, who opted to walk away from a stolen election in 1988 with what was reportedly a very handsome sum. Demonstrators were adamant as they spoke with me. Said one elderly woman: "Please tell your countrymen. We cannot live under Felipe Calderon." Later that day, I hopped the metro across town to visit Lopez Obrador's modest apartment, where crowds of supporters had gathered. Some seemed lost. I recall the look in one woman's eyes as she clutched a hand-made sign. It read: "My Peje, please tell us what to do."

When I returned to my posh, American-populated hotel, I was amazed by CNN International's portrayal of events, which depicted the demonstration as a rowdy refusal to accept the "mano dura," or heavy-hand, of Felipe Calderon's apparent victory. President Bush would publicly congratulate Mr. Calderon later that day.

Needless to say, my Mexican experience was an enlightening one. The future is uncertain. Calderon has promised to change the constitution so he can sell off the state oil company to foreign investors, build on Fox's repeal of land reform rights and aid for the working countryside, and to deepen many of the neoliberal free-market policies which have been so disruptive to so many. It is expected that military repression of the Zapatistas and other marginal groups will accelerate under his presidency. For their part, the Zapatista delegation of La Otra Campana, the "Other Campaign," which has been traveling the country organizing a national justice struggle and urging "no votamos," or non-voting, non-participation in a corrupt and illegitimate system, will now return to the jungles of Chiapas to share what it has learned with the movement there. How the Zapatistas and other groups in Mexico respond to the deepening crisis, and how equally disenfranchised citizens of the Global North relate to these developments, will be of critical importance in determining the direction of world politics in the years to come. •

**BE THE MEDIA!**

# State of Disunion

NUMBER OF  
DOLLARS  
worth of food the  
average American  
family throws away  
annually:  
590

PERCENT OF ALL  
RAIL FATALITIES  
that are "trespasser  
fatalities":  
65

NUMBER OF  
TICKETS ISSUED  
to Rainbow Gathering  
Participants in 2006:  
500+

APPROXIMATE  
NUMBER OF  
DEATHS  
in the conflict between  
Israel and Lebanon:  
400

NUMBER OF  
ISRAELI TROOPS  
that were captured in  
Lebanon that sparked  
the conflict:  
2

NUMBER OF  
DOLLARS  
worth of food that is  
wasted in the USA  
annually:  
75,000,000,000

MILES OF RAIL  
ROAD TRACK  
in Colorado:  
1506

NUMBER OF  
TICKETS ISSUED  
to Rainbow Gathering  
Participants in 2005:  
124

NUMBER OF  
PEOPLE  
left homeless in the  
Israel/Lebanon conflict:  
500,000

NUMBER OF  
BALLOTS FOUND  
in a Mexico City  
dumpster in favor  
of Leftist candidate,  
Andres Manuel Lopez  
Obrador:  
1,000,000

## CALL TO ACTION

The Red Pill is looking for volunteers: graphic designers, writers, poets, cartoonists, artists, and photographers are needed. Get your work published now. Help distribute The Red Pill in your community, church, and school: contact us at [editor@gjredpill.org](mailto:editor@gjredpill.org). You can also do your part to keep us in print by donating time, paper, film, copies, and of course money (it doesn't print itself).



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IF YOU WANT TO KNOW THE TRUTH TAKE

GRAND JUNCTION,  
COLORADO

# The Red Pill



EXPLORE

REALITY

JULY 2006

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# ON THE ROAD ISSUE



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## HIPPIES HAVE RIGHTS TOO

When the The Red Pill got word that the Rainbow Gathering was going to be held in Colorado, we knew that we'd have to send one of our own to cover it. Early news postings on [coloradoindymedia.org](http://coloradoindymedia.org) reported that Forest Service (FS) Law Enforcement Officers or Leo's in Rainbow slang, set up a roadblock not allowing anyone in or out of the Gathering on Monday, June 19th at 7pm. The indymedia article went on to describe how the roadblock was eventually broken:

In the morning a few of our younger family members put on war paint and decided to try to get the supplies in that had been stranded all night. By then the morning leo relief crew arrived and there was about 4-6 leo vehicles and 6 to 8 giddyup (I was still inside the gathering at the time, but got to listen to it unfold via radio). By the time the youngsters got to the block (coming from behind) there was at least 60 -70 of them. And since people had been coming in all night long there was almost 200 people in front of the blockade. As soon as the bro's and sisters from inside the gathering arrived the cops started to freak and started pulling out their guns, shotguns and assault rifles, no lie, no tear gas guns, no pepper spray, machine guns pointed at the family. You wanna know how brave your family is?? How much this family means to all of us?? approaching loaded pointed machine guns and twitchy trigger fingers (the leo's were scared) they did the only thing they could do, they started to "OM" and quickly joined hands and continued to march towards the roadblock. The pham on the other side of the block realized what was happening and they started om-ing joined hands and approached the blockade from the other side. We are lucky no one got shot. I heard later that the om circle was almost complete when the giddyups busted through at a gallop and then all the leo vehicles sped off with there sirens blazing and lights flashing.

The Leo's were also engaging in a mass ticketing campaign, most of the tickets were for illegal gathering... which seems to go against our first amendment guarantee of "the right of the people peaceably to assemble." They even set-up a kangaroo federal court in the Clark, CO fire station in which legal advisors and attorneys were denied entrance and defendants were not allowed to call witnesses to defend themselves. Needless to say, I was itching to see some of the action.

After a car breakdown and hitchhiking through the middle of fucking no where, I arrived at the Gathering. The first thing I saw was a check point where three FS rangers were going through two young women's car, tossing all of their clothes in to the dust. Our car was approached by a tubby blond female FS Leo



THE RED PILL RAINBOW GATHERING HQ

and handed a flyer titled "This Gathering is in Violation of Federal Regulations" which stated, "Participants and spectators involved in the gathering are hereby notified that they are in violation of Federal regulation 36 CFR 261.10(k) and are individually subject to legal action."

In talking with some of the rainbow elders I learned federal scare techniques, harassment and roadblocks are relatively common and stem from the The Rainbow Family's refusal to apply for a permit. It's the Rainbow Family's position that one does not need to ask the permission of the government to assemble peacefully on public lands. Another reason that permits are often not signed is that federal law would hold the person who signed the permit financially responsible "for all injury, loss, or damage, incurred fire suppression cost," and that could include the FS's "Incident Management Team" which is assigned because the federal government annually lists the Rainbow Gathering as a "National Incident."

Far from a national incident, what I saw when I was there was a small city of people living cooperatively rather than competitively. I saw no fights, no violence of any kind, I did see a life sized pirateship that was a stage for theater and music every night. I saw people pull together, lend a hand and make dinner for 20,000. I was moved during the morning of silence observed on the fourth of July, in a prayer for peace. I saw what a system without money would look like. It looked good.



"HIPPIES" ON THIRD PAGE

### Every Sunday • 7PM

Weekly Vegan Dinner. We'll cook the main dish. Please bring a vegan side dish, dessert, or drink. Dinner starts around 7:00PM. *The Confluence Collective (1450 Elm).*



### Every Tuesday • 7PM

The Free Skool @ The Confluence Collective (1450 Elm) is a grassroots effort designed for collective skill-sharing. Anyone is free to attend or teach a class, or help organize the fall semester. Contact 245-3720 for more information. Starting in September.

## "COLLECTIVE" FROM THIRD PAGE

bookstores, Bound Together Bookstore in San Francisco and Left Bank Books in Seattle, and The Wayward Café Collective also in Seattle. Both bookstores have been in business for around thirty years. Both have a wide selection of radical books, zines, posters, t-shirts, etc., as well as community information boards and free information. Left Bank Books no longer has any of the original founding members (although some stop by to visit), and so the collective has been passed on to the next generation of anticapitalists. It would have been nice to talk to some of the collective's members in more detail, but both locations were just too busy with visitors and customers to have a more informative discussion.

The Wayward Café Collective featured an all vegan menu, fair trade coffee, and no refined sugars or hydrogenated oils. It was the first time I had yucca and the best scrambled tofu I had ever eaten. The folks were chill and very helpful. They are looking for a couple new members/cooks and I looked at their application and on the back there was a space where the applicant has to draw either a picture of her worst boss, or of the applicant riding her favorite dinosaur. It's good to see they have a sense of humor.

We can see in groups such as Network of Bay Area Worker Cooperatives (NoBAWC, pronounced No Boss) that there is a rising number of worker-owned and operated establishments and the necessity for these cooperatives/collectives to network and support each other. NoBAWC boasts nearly 30 groups working throughout the San Francisco bay area, including Bound Together Books.

Seeing these collectives in action gave me more of a glimpse of what a strong group of people can accomplish without a boss or some authority figure telling them what to do. I can only imagine how empowering it must be to take that responsibility into your own hands and those of like-minded individuals. Having never been in a place where such a scene exists, it has given me more of an idea of what I would like in my future of participating in the economic system. As I am getting connected with other collectives in the Rocky Mountain region, I'm beginning to see the rising popularity of living an alternative lifestyle outside of the capitalist system. •

If you find yourself in San Francisco or Seattle, check out: Bound Together Bookstore, An Anarchist Collective 1369 Haight Street SF, CA 94117 415-431-8355, Left Bank Books In the Pike Place Market 92 Pike Street Seattle WA 98101 206-622-0195, Wayward Café Collective 901 NE 55th St. (U-Dist) 206-524-0204



### Tuesday, October 10th, 2006

Last day to register to vote in the November's general election. Remember if you've changed addresses, parties, or name you need to reregister. If you haven't vote in five years you need to reregister. If you're a felon and you've completed your sentence you **Can** vote in Colorado.

## EAT FREE; DUMPSTER DIVE

Life on the road can be expensive. Even if you're hitchhiking and hopping trains, you still got to eat and one of the best ways to eat for free is to dumpster dive. For those uninitiated in the art of dumpster diving, eating dumpstered food is one of the most taboo things a middle class white kid can do. But once you get over your bourgeois fears, there are plenty of good eats to be had from dumpsters.

The first question that I often get is: how do you know the food is good to eat? Well us humans come equipped with both eyes and noses for this reason. If you see any mold or discoloration, it's not good. If a can or bottle is swelled, its contents are probably not good. Look for expiration dates. Use your nose; if food smells bad, it is bad. Steer away from meats, especially in the heat of summer, but occasionally you can find still frozen meats in the dumpster. Its pretty common sense. I know many dumpster divers from San Francisco to Lawrence, KS and I don't know a single one who has gotten sick from dumpstered food.

A good place to start looking for your free lunch is the back of a supermarket, in larger cities almost all grocery stores have trash compactors, but in many smaller towns their dumpsters are wide open for the picking. If there is an extended power outage, grocery stores will by law have to throw away all the frozen and refrigerated food that is in the store.

Dumpsters behind catering companies are often full of good food that didn't get eaten at the catered event. Bakeries and convenience stores are both good bets to get some day-old sweets. Apartment buildings are often pretty good for canned goods and non-perishables; people move out and just throw away their whole pantry. Pizza restaurants, especially places that sell pizza by the slice, often take all of the unclaimed pizzas to the dumpster at the end of the night. This summer I was in Lawrence, KS, and a downtown pizzeria was known for leaving their old pizzas next to the dumpster at the end of the night. I went down at 11:15pm for some free pizza and when I got there, there were already five people eating pizza in the alley.

It's important not to just think about retail locations. Food distribution centers throw food out much sooner than retail centers. Think about the time of year. Hitting the dumpsters after dorm move out day will offer up tons of frozen food that was stashed in Freshman mini-fridges. It's also important to be curious, creative, and open every dumpster you find.

Dumpstering is like a treasure hunt everyday. It's fun, economical, and environmental. I find it funny that the capitalists who are fond of saying 'There's no such thing as a free lunch' are the same ones who fill dumpsters with edible food.

Oh and guys, dumpsters behind flower shops often have what you need to get out of trouble, or into it.

### Organize an Event of Protest

So we can fill this empty spot.

*Don't Let This Happen Again!*

## CATCH THAT FREIGHT TRAIN!

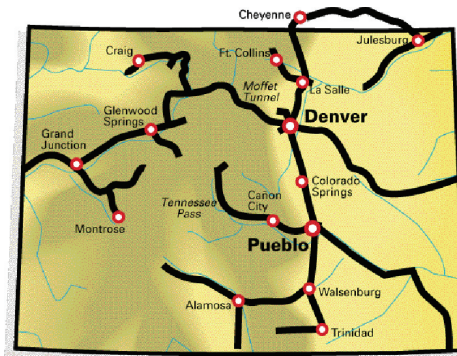
*Official disclaimer— Train hopping is illegal, and trains are dangerous. Like anything else in life, you hop trains at your own risk.*

I have always wanted to hop a freight train. I think it began as a kid spending all my time at the bike jumps near the tracks in Silt, CO. As kids we would jump on to the ladders on coal cars and ride a few hundred yards down jumping off as the train gained momentum. In high school and later in college I read many beat generation works, and I fell in love with the wild expanses and freedom in their words and deeds. I wanted to hitch across the country, hop trains and live on the road.

Last week, I hopped my first train. It was a short ride from Colorado Springs North to Denver. I also had a guide who guessed his number of train rides at about 100, but he had never hopped on this line and was unfamiliar with the train-yard in Denver, which would be our most likely encounter with Bulls (Railroad Cops).

It was about 2pm when we walked down to the Park next the train yard in Colorado Springs, just a few blocks from down town. We waited under an overpass with a couple homeless people sleeping around us, and watched our train slowly get ready for its journey north. After an eternity waiting nervously the train started to pull out. We waited for the first engine to get nearly parallel with us when we ran full speed into the yard with our backpacks on. We crossed eight tracks and stopped behind an overpass pillion and waited for the fifth engine, or 'unit', at the front of the train. My guide, a bisexual Native American, named Sixty-Five, went first and I followed him up the ladder and into the unit. We were going to be riding in style: leather recliners, port-a-potty, and air-conditioning. "Holy shit," I thought to myself "This was too easy."

Just then the train began slowing down again, and stopped not 200 yards down the track. "Just stay low and out of sight," Sixty-Five said. Thirty seconds passed and the conductor walked into our unit. "You Kids going to Denver?" the conductor asked without a



trace of surprise on his face. "You can turn the air on," he continued. "Do you have enough water? If not we've got some in the front engine," and with that he left.

I had always heard from train-hopping kids that often the brakeman and the conductor don't mind train-hoppers and often give them water and assistance, but I didn't believe it until I saw it. As the train pulled out and gained momentum we felt a huge sense of relief. We waved at kids at railroad crossings. In the blazing heat we ran out of water quickly, and decided to visit our new friend the conductor for some water. We slowly made our way from engine to engine as the train rocked its way north at 35 mph. The ground speeding below the gaps between engines and the huge steel wheels reminded me that trains are unforgiving and there was no room for fuck-ups.

We traded stories for water and the conductor said that they will slow to less the 2 mph well before the yard as to give us a chance of getting off without getting busted. We jumped off at Colfax Ave and hit the ground running. I looked back in time to see the conductor waving. •

### "ZAPATISTA" FROM FIFTH PAGE

off attendees. His chief opponent, the charming and hot-headed Mexico City mayor Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador (Party of the Democratic Revolution, PRD), had initially elicited strong support for his reformist, pro-poor and populist message, but by July 2 had seen his base eroded by months of "guerrilla sucia," or dirty-war politics. I saw countless adds accusing Lopez Obrador (also AMLO) of collusion with Venezuela's demonized President Hugo Chavez and Cuba's Fidel Castro, and with footage of 2002 riots in Venezuela (rumored to have been CIA-orchestrated, no less) suggesting that an AMLO victory would mean the same fate for Mexico. Nevertheless, the populist AMLO was predicted by

some commentators to win by 5% or more. That victory never materialized.

On the evening of elections, the government elections agency, which had violated many of its own rules to favor the PAN candidate Calderon and was already famous for past fraud, came on TV and announced the vote too close to call. Lopez Obrador immediately appeared at a press conference and announced that preliminary results gave him the most unbelievable margin of victory: 15,000 votes. Moment's later the third-party PRI candidate, a dinosaur "mafioso," came on to declare defeat and urged Lopez Obrador to respect

### "ZAPATISTA" ON EIGHTH PAGE

#### RED PILL LOCATIONS

You can pick up your copy of The Red Pill at the following locations: Planet 9, Heart of the Dragon, Third World Imports, Planet Earth and the 4 Directions Gallery. Download the Red Pill at: <http://colorado.indymedia.org>

Become our friend on [myspace.com](http://myspace.com).

## ON THE ROAD FOR OVER 50 YEARS

In 1947, Jack Kerouac accidentally crosses paths with Neil Cassidy, fresh out of another stint in prison, and freshly married. Kerouac was a New Yorker, who was digging his scene, hanging out with Allen Ginsberg and friends. Cassidy inspires Kerouac with his "balls to the walls"/"live for the moment" lifestyle and Kerouac finally decides "what the hell" and joins Cassidy in criss-crossing the U.S. For the next 3 years.

Kerouac does odd jobs and begs for spare change and takes off on a ballsy, bus, train, and hitchhiking adventure. On their first trip, Kerouac and Cassidy stop off in Denver, where the wide open spaces blows Kerouac's mind. Kerouac splits off to California alone, working on farms to support himself. Once Kerouac finally settles back home in New York, Cassidy shows up again and confounds any opportunity Kerouac has left for a "normal" life. This time, they take off to New Orleans, hooking up with author William Burroughs and his bizarre entourage. This trip, they end up in San Francisco, chockful of good jazz and beat culture, which they, of course, personify.

Next winter, Kerouac picks up Cassidy in Denver, on the way back to New York, where they hang out awhile. In a role reversal, Cassidy tries to settle down, and Kerouac takes off alone to Denver in the spring. Cassidy is not the settling down type, and soon joins Kerouac in Denver. This time they head for Mexico City.

Cassidy is a serial womanizer, who will have three wives and four children in the course of this three year adventure. Kerouac starts out as a real cynical and depressed character, and ends up finding out about love. Opposites attract, and this is no different. However, Kerouac and Cassidy have a lot more in common than they initially thought that they did.



Shithappens. Their adventures were mindblowing and epochal, especially for having happened over fifty years ago. They were fueled by wine, jazz, reefer, cigarettes, strange drugs, wild women, and crazy men. Somehow, they always kept their cool, man.. They are America's ultimate road trippers.

Unwittingly, Kerouac became the ultimate phenomenological cultural anthropologist, plunging headfirst into every situation with little or no hesitation. He had the balls to look America in the eye, and honestly evaluate whatever he saw, good, bad, or ugly.

He didn't set out to invent the Great American Road Trip, but he damn sure set a high standard for them. His book, "On The Road" is truly a great treasure on its own, and this article is lovingly dedicated to the memory of good ol' Jack Kerouac. •

### "HIPPIES" FROM SECOND PAGE

As it turned out, I got to the gathering a little late for the police action, a dozen or so people were arrested the week I was there. I also saw groups of 10-15 Sheriff and FS Leo's walking around the gathering taking photos of individual's faces. The low level harassment and intimidation changed everyday; one day the Feds came in and gave a handful of kitchens tickets for constructing a permanent structure, and then the next day, they gave out a bunch of tickets for smoking outside of a building or vehicle. Much of this information comes from listening to a handset radio, a form of internal Rainbow communication.

But by the 4th of July, the Feds began to realize that the Gathering was going to happen with or without them. After the morning silence was broken I watched a group of 10 Leo's walk into main circle, which was a massive drum circle/dance party. A naked guy broke from the crowd and gave a running naked hug to a gun toting Leo, and the Leo hugged back. I packed out the next morning at dawn. •

## WORKER OWNED AND OPERATED

It being a good two years since I had taken a road trip, I decided this summer I was going to do something about it. Having never been to the pacific northwest, when the opportunity arose, I jumped on the idea. Mostly I was looking forward to getting out of arid GJ, seeing the Pacific Ocean, and walking through the Redwood forests. Being able to experience those two aspects of mother nature will forever be in my memory as well as the nights we cooked the best fresh fish, potatoes, and corn on the cob to be prepared in camp and then ate it with our dirty hands.

We also took the opportunity to quickly check out a few worker owned and operated collectives; 2

### "COLLECTIVE" ON SEVENTH PAGE

#### Every Friday • Noon

A Voice of Reason will be holding a lunch hour peace vigil to end the war in Iraq and Afghanistan.

At the intersection of 12th and North.

#### Every Wednesday • 6PM

Grand Junction Fair Trade Alliance meets at The Confluence Collective (1450 Elm) to work on Free Trade Issues both locally and globally.

#### Monday, August 7th, 2006 • 7pm

The Eclectic Wanderers of Whit and Whimsy Open Mic Poetry Night.  
Coffe Muggers on Main St.



# Z A P A T I S T A

If you have ever pondered the real-world impacts of global capitalism, western development, U.S. Imperialism abroad, and the political, social, environmental and economic crises that these phenomena have brought to our lives, you need look no further than Mexico. Having recently emerged from seventy years of single party rule, the country has plunged headlong into the dominant global system with the embracing of free market doctrines, western democracy, privatization, and "let-them-eat-cake" capitalism in ways that are radically altering the fortunes of Mexico's forty million citizens. On the cusp of the country's second multi-party presidential election, I decided that I would go and see what all the hub-bub was about.

The country's political class, historically distinct from the kinds of business interests which dominate their neighbor to the north, launched the first of a series of reforms so long sought by foreign investors and governments when they ratified the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1993. The Agreement, joined by the U.S. and Canada, struck down many of the protections which were the result of decades of citizen struggle for economic, social and political justice and representation. I visited Tlatelolco Plaza in Mexico City, where on October 2, 1968, government forces cracked down on one of such citizen struggles, killing 300 students, arresting



many more, and reportedly disappearing witnesses in the surrounding buildings. In the face of centuries of foreign oppression, subtle or less-so, Mexicans had labored to create an independent, Western-style government that promised them rights to land reform, education, employment, development, autonomy, and energy independence. With NAFTA and the more subtle forms of social control being pushed by the global corporate elite, these rights were replaced by the heavy hand of free markets, foreign investors, and a Mexican political class that have repeatedly demonstrated their willingness to join foreigners in the wholesale exploitation of the country. Many social groups in Mexico, including agriculturalists, women, indigenous, the lower classes, and those employed in state-protected industries, have been severely pained

by these developments. Some sectors have grown rich. While the prophets of this new world economic project promised new prosperity and western-style development through foreign investment, the reality of its implementation was one of impoverishment, the growth of exploitative industries like the Northern maquiladora sweatshops, a mushrooming gap between the rich and poor, environmental degradation, migration of the unemployed to urban slums and the United States, skyrocketing infant mortality rates, commercialization, and the unrepentantly violent destruction of traditional ways of life.

It was then appropriate that the indigenous people of Mexico's southernmost state, Chiapas, chose the day of NAFTA's implementation, January 1, 1994, to declare war on the Mexican government and those foreign companies threatening the livelihood of their country. The indigenous movement sought to align itself with a long history of populist Mexican revolutionaries, especially the legacy of the cowboy warriors following Emilio Zapata, with the adoption of the name "Zapatista."

Famous for its presentation of black-masked, jungle-hardened indigenous, The Ejercito Zapatista Liberacion Nacional (EZLN), the Zapatista Army of National Liberation, represented the counterweight to the top-down, elite-imposed epoch shaking Mexico at the time by calling for a national, democratic revolution "from below," - for, by,

and of those marginal peoples most damaged by the new system. The charismatic EZLN Subcomandante Marcos became an international symbol of resistance, and his poetic musings quickly found audiences in the Americas, Europe and elsewhere.

The battle would not be so easy. In the years since, the largely Mayan-populated Lacandon Jungle in eastern Chiapas, Mexico's most impoverished state and the origin of the Zapatista uprising, has become the site of a low-intensity genocide. More than half the Mexican military is encamped around the autonomous zones where Zapatista-aligned communities seek to survive outside the dominant, exploitative system by independently organizing everything from food production to education to government and defense forces. Abductions, rape and killings are the common

# V A C A T I O N

currency of military occupation there. Military advisors from the U.S. (which initially considered declaring the Zapatistas a "terrorist" organization), Europe, and the corporate sector have actively provided support since the repression of the uprising. Foreign companies are involved in prospecting for pharmaceuticals, uranium, and dam sites in Chiapas, and it is rumored that the eastern jungle may mask the largest petroleum deposit in the Hemisphere. The government has additionally refused to honor peace treaties and international law in its dealing with the Zapatistas, and a low-intensity conflict continues. Develop of energy and economic disruption of traditional lifestyles has pushed many Chiapan indigenous into the larger population centers of Tuxtla Gutierrez and San Cristobal, where I saw them surviving on meager incomes, from selling a variety of

wares in city markets or to tourists, working as low-wage unskilled laborers, or for the more enterprising indigenous that have established construction and transportation monopolies with ladino (non-indigenous Mexican) backing. For it's part, the government has actively sought to erode the Zapatista's sources of support, and has used land reform and other pressures to entice certain communities, religious groups and regions into withdrawing their solidarity. In the town of San Cristobal de Las Casas, seated among colonial cobblestone streets enveloped by jungle and clouds in the state's central highlands, I spoke to an elderly woman whose frontier settlement had defied the government. In August of 1999, some 500 federal troops parachuted into and surrounded her small colonia of Amador Hernandez in the Montes Azules of Northeastern Chiapas. Unarmed road blocks which the community had constructed to stop the development of a large highway (and military artery) into the jungle were violently broken. She recalled how helicopters had terrorized the town for days, and some of her neighbors later reported seeing teams of non-Mexican engineers accompanying the military forces. Amador Hernandez was in the vicinity of purportedly large petroleum deposits, she posited,



and the government was concerned that the settlers' movement might seek to threaten extraction.

At the same time I had been watching events develop in Chiapas, I could find nothing but praise for the success of Mexico's "democratic opening" in the U.S. press. Critics heralded the rise of the far-right National Action Party (PAN) to the presidency in 2000 as a new dawn for Mexican politics and the people. What I saw on the ground would not only shatter this illusion - it would betray the depth of media fraud coloring the minds and destinies of those in my home country. Sometime around the end of the Reagan administration, political and business elites began to rewrite their policy toward Latin America, and many other world hot-spots where the former policy of brutal repression of populist or anti-imperialist movements (see Chile's Allende

or Guatemala's CIA-assassinated Torrijos) and support for authoritarian regimes (see the Somoza family in Nicaragua and General Efraim Rios Montt in Guatemala) was producing backlashes too difficult to control. Instead, as a number of now-public National Security Council documents and State Department musings of the time describe, new initiatives would be undertaken to develop "polyarchic democracy" in the region. A "democratic" facade of regular elections which could often appear and even be free, would enable foreign interests to maintain their control through collusion with legitimate political parties and competing domestic elites, through economic restructuring that limited politicians' freedom, and through a return to military intervention when necessary. I was curious to see how all this fit into the Mexican context. By the

evening of July 2, the day 41% of eligible Mexicans declined to go to the polls in the country's second open presidential election, the answer was clear.

President Fox's successor, the pro-business PAN candidate Felipe Calderon, is a wheiny, wonkish and uncharismatic Yale-educated technocrat, whom I watched deliver terrible speeches to the cheers of paid-

**"ZAPATISTA" ON SIXTH PAGE**

**Saturday, July 29th 2006•6pm**

"Celebrate the Hands of Harvest" Child and Migrant Services Benefit Concert 2006. Featuring Quemando, a 11 piece salsa band. Tickets are \$20 at the door.

Grande River Vinyards I-70 Exit 42

**August 4th-6th, 2006**

1st Annual Rocky Mountain Collective Retreat to be held at Enoch Lake, CO. The goal is to better organize and network with regional activists. To get involved contact Connie at 245-3720

**Until Thursday, August 10th, 2006**

The Department of Energy Uranium Leasing Program Draft Programmatic Environmental Assessment is available for review and comment. The draft is available at [http://www.lm.doc.gov/lands/uranium\\_leasing/uraniumleasing.htm](http://www.lm.doc.gov/lands/uranium_leasing/uraniumleasing.htm). Comments can be made by email: [ulcomments@gjo.doe.gov](mailto:ulcomments@gjo.doe.gov), phone: 1-800-399-5618, fax 1-970-248-6040, mail: Uranium Leasing PEA Comments c/o U.S Dept. of Energy 2597 B3/4 RD Grand Junction, CO 81503. The last public hearing is going to held at the Norwood Community Center 1670 Naturita Street on August 1st, 2006•7pm.