

Oaxaca State Police Arrest Nicanor Salud Rasgado of the Other Campaign in San Blas Atempa... Again

This Time, on the 14-Month-Old Arrest Warrant that Still Hangs Over the Heads of 72 Other Citizens

By Al Giordano
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One day after citizens of San Blas Atempa marched against police brutality and repression, Oaxaca state police arrested Nicanor Salud Rasgado for the second time in a month in the city of Tehuantepec. Nicanor is now the tenth political prisoner from San Blas being held in the nearby federal prison.

Salud – who was arrested and freed the same day on February 19, in a bizarre police raid on his motor-car (a three-wheeled taxi that is the favored form of public transportation between San Blas Atempa and nearby Tehuantepec) in which police brazenly planted a pistol and cocaine on the dissident – was arrested again today after attending a protest march in Tehuantepec organized by the teachers' union named Sección 22.

Salud marched in solidarity with the teachers this afternoon and then boarded a taxi. Police stopped the cab, placed him under arrest, and brought him directly to the “Center for Social Rehabilitation” (CERESO, in its Spanish initials) where he joins nine other San Blaseños that Zapatista Subcomandante Marcos has said are being “held hostage” by Oaxaca Governor Ulises Ruiz Ortiz in an attempt to quell the pro-democracy movement there.



Nicanor Salud Rasgado
Photo: D.R. 2006 Bertha Rodríguez Santos

The latest pretext to put this social fighter behind bars is a 14-month-old arrest warrant stemming from the day on January 1, 2005 that gunmen opened fire on San Blas citizens from the balcony of City Hall. A melee ensued in which automobiles of city bureaucrats were burned, and a public armed only with rocks and sticks overwhelmed police and established an Autonomous Popular City Hall. Nicanor is charged with “damages to the City hall, burning vehicles and aggressions against members of the PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party)” according to his supporters who contacted the Other Journalism moments after Salud's arrest today. Similar charges hang over the heads of 72 other San Blas citizens who recaptured their City Hall on that New Year's Day. The latest arrest of Nicanor Salud suggests that there could soon be more such arrests to come.

Last February 6, the Zapatista spokesman known as “Delegate Zero” visited San Blas Atempa and vowed “a national rebellion like what you did in San Blas,” and the next day Marcos visited with five political prisoners from the town in the federal penitentiary in Tehuantepec (those visits are recorded in the Other Newsreel, “Marcos Goes to Jail”).

Last week, the Other Journalism visited with Nicanor Salud and interviewed him for an upcoming video newsreel. To be continued...

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