

Letter to Don Benito Rojas Guerrero

Originally published in Spanish by the EZLN

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Zapatista Army of National Liberation
Mexico

August 8, 2005

To: Don Benito Rojas Guerrero
From: Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos

Don Benito:

We send our greetings, and we are writing you in order to comment on some things in your letter which was published in *Correo Ilustrado* [Letters to the Editor] in today's *La Jornada*. Since my understanding is that it was summarized due to space requirements, I will only touch on what was published.

First - When we referred to the scoundrels and crooks in the PRD, we were talking about, and we will be talking about, the same ones whom you noted as being inconstant, who hijacked the party, to those whom ideas and principles don't matter, who use the PRD (and people like you) for their personal interests. That is how those attending the August 6 *encuentro* understood it, and that is how, according to what I've seen in various publications, it was understood by other PRD members who are dissatisfied with the direction their party has taken (like Marcos Rascón). I know you would prefer it if the distinction were to be made, but what always happens is, in differentiating, they hide behind that to say "they're not talking about us," or they accuse their current rivals (in the fight for positions and jobs). And it is those rascals and crooks who are leading the PRD and who are surrounding López Obrador. And they are the ones who are responsible for our current position, because, in addition to everything you point out, we would add those attacks which they've made on us.

Second - I have reviewed the articles and reports by Elio Henríquez and Hermann Bellinghausen who were present at that meeting for *La Jornada*, as well as the recording and transcription of what I said in the two speeches I made on August 6. At no point did I say "you're with López Obrador or you're with the EZLN." If you review the articles by the two journalists, the recording and the transcription (which will be available, complete, on the *Revista Rebeldía* web page), you will see that not only did I not say that, but, in addition, some of the statements speak to the exact opposite. As you can see for yourself in the articles, and by speaking to any of those present, a *compañero* from one of the organizations of the left who was there expressed his concern that a condition of joining "the other campaign" was that one had to be against AMLO. To which I responded: "It's not a condition for being here, being against him or anyone. What is clear is that we can't tie the other campaign to the election campaign. We have to be very clear about that, we're not going there." I can also tell you that another *compañero* from another organization defended, in a long speech, the position that AMLO had to be supported (he even went so far as to compare AMLO with Hidalgo, Morelos, Zapata, Villa...and the Virgin of Guadalupe). When one of those attending the meeting, irritated more by the length of the speech than by what he was saying, tried to silence him, we intervened in order to ask that we listen to everything that *compañero* wanted to say.

Ask that person if he were run off, or mistreated, or if we behaved rudely to him (at the end, he gave us several books, so that we could learn more about his organization's positions). We did not shoot him, we did not kidnap him, we did not torture him, nor did we beat him, nor did we harass him. Like the PRD did with our *compañeros* in Zinacantán, Las Margaritas, Altamirano and Ocosingo (those are indeed examples of the application of the "Bush doctrine" of "if you're not with us, you're against us...and we'll attack you"). Believe me, all the thoughts that were expressed there were respected. But also believe me that we shall make it quite clear that we do not share those [thoughts] that say the PRD and AMLO have to be supported.

Third - What we are doing, Don Benito, is not a result of decisions made by the subcomandante, but by the entire EZLN, backed by an internal *consulta*, following an analysis and discussion about the consequences and responsibilities of what we are doing and will be doing: criticizing the political class (of which the PRD forms part) and trying to build an alternative of the left to it (including an alternative of the left in the face of the PRD) with another way of doing politics and with the objective of a new constitution. I believe, with pride, that if anyone has demonstrated that they assume responsibility for the consequences of what they do, it is the EZLN.

Fourth - We could invite you and those, like you, who are in the PRD and who are honest and consistent, to come and speak with us, and in that way try to convince us to support López Obrador and to accept our being led by those who despise and repress us. We could try and convince you to leave the PRD and not to continue supporting, by your presence, a politics that has nothing revolutionary nor democratic, let alone leftist, about it. Better that you make another organization and join the "other campaign" under the same circumstances of equality and respect which we have already agreed to with other political organizations. We do not do so because it is not our way to tell anyone what they should or should not do. Everyone knows where they are, and, in effect, as you pointed out, assumes the consequences and responsibilities for their decisions.

Fifth - I do not know why you say we are ungrateful when we criticize the PRD. Should we have been thankful after the vote on the indigenous counter reform, after the attacks, the beatings, the harassment and armed attacks we have suffered? After the complicit silence "in order not to play along with the right"?

Sixth - Those crooks and scoundrels of the PRD are, in addition, cheats. They pretend they are indignant about what we say, but they don't take their eyes off the polls, and they breathe easily: distancing themselves from Zapatismo has always been their obsession, and now "the one possessed," Marcos, is solving that problem. Speak with them, and, if they are sincere (which I doubt), they're going to tell you that they're happy. That it's no longer necessary to say they are "centrist" in order to win conservative votes, because the stridency of the one on the psychoanalyst's couch (the Sup) has automatically placed them in that (nonexistent) political region. Now no one can accuse AMLO and the PRD of being radical, because the radicals are in the "other campaign." And now the PRD can continue talking with the big businessmen and the most conservative sectors, warning them that, if they don't support López Obrador, the option of the radical left could grow, shouting, "with a few kilos more," "from the mountains of the Mexican southeast."

Look, Don Benito, none of the PRD "leaders" (who represent you and others like you) have really responded to what we pointed out. On the contrary, they have resorted to the trick of answering as if what the EZLN were complaining to the PRD about was their not supporting their armed struggle. There you have it: they're scoundrels and crooks.

Seventh - Don Benito, I know that you, and many like you, are deeply upset by our position. We will always receive the criticisms and reflections of people like you with respect and seriousness. And be assured that we will not resort to the methods the PRD uses to confront those who don't share their policies, methods with which that party has confronted us ever since their betrayal of the constitutional recognition of indigenous rights and culture.

I won't take any more of your time, Don Benito. I hope that, through the *Revista Rebeldía* web page or by any other means you find convenient, you will send us your complete letter. We are interested in learning of it. Meanwhile, once again, our greetings and respect.

From the mountains of the Mexican Southeast
Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos

Mexico, August of 2005