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The Unruly World Order

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Even though Chiapas and Kosovo are geographically so far away from each other, both places seem to be tied up by two of the most barbaric and unjust mechanisms of today's world: warfare and globalization.

The brutality imposed upon Yugoslavia is certainly more destructive than that upon Mexico; Kosovo is already under open internal warfare and foreign intervention, while the indigenous in Chiapas, though suffering the scourge of low-intensity warfare for five years now, are not under direct and open war attack. In any case, in both places hundreds of peoples have been killed, and thousands have been displaced due to military terrorism either by direct bombing and ethnic genocide (Kosovo) or by the threat of military presence in their communities (Chiapas).

As the world globalizes, the defense of the policy of national security and the issue of human rights abuses come together in new and dramatic ways: words and speeches have turned void and are used towards the specific interests of the parties involved. Attacks in Yugoslavia, either by NATO's aligned forces, or by the Yugoslav military, are justified in the name of ethnic cleansing or as part of human rights abuses, depending on the origin of the speech. No trace of political solutions; these seem to have been thrown overboard, using instead the logic of opposite parties to cover the hollow left by disaster. In Chiapas, dialogue has been cut off between the government and the Zapatistas. Instead, constant threats and aggressions from paramilitary forces supported by the government, are causing displacement of thousands of indigenous poor people from their communities. These two cases are exemplary of the brutality that is imposed upon the innocent and poor populations worldwide.

The reaction of the media, on the other hand, is to present destruction as inevitable, as an "entirely predictable" consequence of the use of force. Sophisticated missiles, in the case of Kosovo, suggest rather a hi-tech virtual reality game than the on-ground destruction that is happening to our brothers and sisters. In Chiapas, the media keeps silence, only one newspaper in the entire country (La Jornada) is keeping daily track of the events, a newspaper read by a minority of concerned and active civilians.

The thrust to uniformity of the current globalization is also part of this brutality. Global economics and the erasing of economic borders have been accepted as historical processes, and the world seems to reorient itself towards injustice and displacement of those who do not follow its premises based on uniformity and dominance. Cultural differences are not recognized, so that those "others" -the indigenous, the poor, the culturally different- no longer exist. The "other" is absent in the political discourse of globalization, the "other" is always a victim of power.

When the Zapatistas declared "Never again a Mexico without us," they spoke not only in the voice of the indigenous peoples, but of all those "others" considered as disposable by the global economy. There is much to learn from the Zapatista struggle: instead of separation, it seeks inclusion. Far from terrorism, it favors the weapon of dialogue with civil society. To confront attacks it fosters the ethic of dignity. But more than that, it recognizes diversity, while reinforcing cultural identity, beginning with the most profound: the identities of the indigenous peoples.

These examples should be kept in mind when we read about the "moral compass" of US and Mexican government elites; void words used as the obscene justification for immoral intervention.

If we believe and work for peace building, we have to continue supporting non-violent measures; diplomacy and negotiations are never at an end. We have to create the conditions to avoid the war dynamics that are being implemented today all around the globe. We need to substitute discourses of unethical war attacks with mechanisms that prompt dialogue, through letters, demonstrations, lectures, anything that indicate our personal or collective opposition to warfare and social injustice. We need to see the world through the lens of the "other" as well. We have to be attentive, alert, and prepared in order to

recognize the real problems through the "other" and not just through ourselves to be able to reach political agreements that give way to a more democratic and peaceful world order.