

# **Should We Be Building A Wall Between Mexico And Our Southern Border Mr. President?**

What follows is a short history of Mexico and one of her great reformers, Emiliano Zapata, and what U.S. intervention did to him, as described in these short quotations from Eduardo Galeano's book "Open Veins of Latin America"

## **Emiliano Zapata: Great Mexican Reformer**

### *Some Basic Mexican History*

*"Just a century after the Artigas land code [1815], Emiliano Zapata introduced far-reaching agrarian reform in his zone of revolutionary jurisdiction in southern Mexico...In this republic of outcasts, workers' wages had not risen by a centavo since the historic rising of the priest Miguel Hidalgo in 1810. In 1910, 800-odd latifundistas, many of them foreigners, owned almost all the national territory. They were urban princelings who lived in the capital or in Europe and very occasionally visited their estates---where they slept shielded by high, buttressed walls of dark stone. On the other side of the walls, the peons huddled in adobe hovels. Of a population of 15 million, 12 million depended on rural wages, almost all of which were paid at the hacienda company stores in astronomically priced beans, flour, and liquor. Prison, barracks, and vestry shared the task of combating the natural defects of the Indians who, as a member of one illustrious family put it, were born "weak, drunk, and thieving." With the worker tied by inherited debts or by legal contract, slavery was the actual labor system on Yucatan henequen plantations, on the tobacco plantations of the Valle Nacional, on Chiapas and Tabasco timberland and fruit orchards, and on the rubber, coffee, sugarcane, tobacco and fruit plantations of Veracruz, Oaxaca, and Morelos. **In a fine report on his visit, John Kenneth Turner wrote that "the United States has virtually reduced [President] Diaz to a political dependency, and by so doing has virtually transformed Mexico into a slave colony of the United States."** U.S. capital made juicy profits*

directly or indirectly from its association with the dictatorship. **“The Americanization of Mexico of which Wall Street boasts,” wrote Turner, “is being accomplished and accompanied with a vengeance.”** (that being written by Turner in 1909-1910.)

“In 1845 the United States had annexed the Mexican territories of Texas and California, where it restored slavery in the name of civilization. Mexico also lost the present states of Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada and Utah---more than half the country. The stolen territory was equal in size to present-day Argentina. “Poor Mexico!” it has been said ever since, “so far from God and so close to the United States!” After the invasion, the rest of Mexico’s mutilated territory suffered from U.S. investments in copper, petroleum, rubber, sugar, banking, and transportation. Far from guiltless in the extermination of the Maya and Yaqui Indians on Yucatan henequen plantations---concentration camps where men, women, and children were bought and sold like mules---was the Standard Oil affiliate American Cordage Trust, which bought more than half the henequen and could sell it cheap at a handsome profit. But sometimes, as Turner discovered, the exploitation of slave labor was direct. A North American administrator bought press-ganged peons in lots at fifty pesos a head. He told Turner: “We always kept them as long as they lasted....In less than three months we buried more than half of them.”\*

- “Mexico was the preferred country for U.S. investments: at the end of the century it had almost a third of the U.S. capital invested abroad. In Chihuahua state and in other northern areas, William Randolph Hearst, the “Citizen Kane” of Orson Welles’s film, owned more than 5 million hectares.”

(“Open Veins of Latin America” by Eduardo Galeano, p. 120, par. 2, sel parts, p. 121 par. 1-2)

Based on that footnote, it is no wonder communist revolutionaries during the late 1960s kidnapped Patty Hearst and did an honest job of re-educating her about her family’s sins. She actually came to “see the light of day” on these issues. They released her unharmed.

## 1910: Emiliano Zapata

“Mexico’s hour of revenge struck in 1910: the country rose in arms against Porfirio Diaz. An agricultural leader headed the insurrection in the south: he was Emiliano Zapata, purest of revolutionaries, most loyal to the cause of the poor, most determined to right the wrongs of society.

For agricultural communities throughout Mexico, the last decades of the nineteenth century had been a period of ruthless pillage. In Morelos, towns and villages were victims of a bout of land-, water-, and labor-

grabbing as sugarcane plantations expanded voraciously. Sugar haciendas dominated the life of the state, and their prosperity had brought with it modern mills, big distilleries, and railroad spurs. In Anenecuilco, where Zapata lived and to which he belonged body and soul, the plundered peasants claimed the soil they had worked for seven continuous centuries: they were there before Cortes arrived. But those who spoke up were marched off to forced labor in Yucatan. Throughout their state, whose good land belonged to seventeen families, they lived considerably worse than the polo ponies the latifundistas pampered in luxurious stables. A law in 1909, providing further seizure of land from its legitimate owners, was the last straw. Zapata, taciturn but famous as the state's best horsebreaker and respected by all for his honesty and courage, turned guerrilleros. The men of the south quickly formed a liberating army.

Diaz fell and the revolution swept Francisco Indalecio Madero into power. Promises of agrarian reform soon disappeared in a fog of "institutionalism." On his wedding day, Zapata had to interrupt the party: the government had sent General Victoriano Huerta's troops to crush him. According to the learned pundits in the city, the hero had become a "bandit." **In November 1911 Zapata proclaimed the Plan de Ayala and wrote: "I am resolved to struggle against everything and everybody." The Plan noted that "the overwhelming majority of Mexican communities and citizens are owners of no more than the land they walk on," and proposed that the property of enemies of the revolution be nationalized, that lands usurped by the latifundista avalanche be returned to their legal owners, and that a third of the remaining haciendados' lands be expropriated.** The Plan de Ayala became a magnet, drawing thousands upon thousands of peasants into Zapata's ranks. Zapata denounced "the infamous pretension" of reducing everything to a mere change of men in government: the revolution was not being made for that." ("Open Veins of Latin America" p. 122, par. 1-2, all emphasis mine)

"The struggle went on for nearly ten years---against Diaz, against Madero, against Huerta the assassin, and later against Venustiano Carranza. **The long war years were also years of continual U.S. intervention: the Marines staged two landings and several bombardments, diplomatic agents framed a variety of political plots, and Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson successfully organized the murder of President Madero and his vice president.** The successive shifts of power did not dilute the fury of the attacks against Zapata and his forces...Powerful armies were sent, one after another, against him. Fire, massacre, and the devastation of villages proved equally futile. Men, women, and children were shot or hanged as "Zapatista spies," with proclamations of victory following the butcheries...More than once Zapata's forces counterattacked successfully up to the suburbs of the capital. After the fall of Huerta's regime, Zapata and Pancho Villa--the "Attila of the South" and the "Centaur of the North"--

-entered Mexico City as conquerors and arranged a temporary division of power." (ibid. p. 123, par. 1, sel. parts)

## *A Model Of Social Justice: Real Socialism and Communism Are Not At Odds With Democracy*

***"The agrarian reform proposed to "destroy at the roots forever the unjust monopoly of land, in order to realize a social state which guarantees fully the natural right which every man has to an extension of land necessary for his own subsistence and that of his family." Again, seeking the true Biblical solution of Numbers 26:51-56! "Lands taken from communities and individuals since the deamortization law of 1856 were restored; maximum limits were laid down for holding sizes, according to climate and fertility; and the lands of enemies of the revolution were declared national property. This last political decision had, as in the Artigas agrarian reform, a clear economic meaning: the latifundistas were the enemy. Technical schools, tool factories, and a rural credit bank were established: sugarmills and distilleries were nationalized and became public services. A system of local democracy put the reins of political power and of economic maintenance in the people's hands. Zapatista schools sprouted and spread, popular juntas were organized for defense and promotion of revolutionary principles, and an authentic democracy took shape and gained strength. The municipalities were nuclear units of government and the people elected their leaders, courts, and police. Military leaders had to submit to the wishes of organized civilian communities. Bureaucrats and generals no longer imposed methods of production and of living. The revolution tied itself to tradition and functioned "in conformity with the customs and usage of each pueblo...that is, if a certain pueblo wants the communal system, so it will be executed, if another pueblo wants the division of land in order to admit small property, so it will be done."***

*"In the spring of 1915 all the fields of Morelos were under cultivation, mostly with corn and food crops. Meanwhile food was short and hunger loomed in Mexico City. Carranza, who had won the presidency, also ordered land reform, but his henchmen speedily cornered all its benefits. In 1916 Morelos's capital Cuernavaca and the Zapatista district were threatened with powerful forces. Crops now coming to fruition, minerals, hides, and machines were attractive booty for the advancing officers, who set fires as they came, and proclaimed "a work of reconstruction and progress."*

*“A stratagem and a betrayal ended Zapata’s life in 1919. A thousand men lying in ambush fired into his body. He died at the same age as Che Guevara.” (“Open Veins of Latin America” p. 123, par. 2, p. 124, par. 3, all emphasis mine)*

## *What Happened in Mexico Since Zapata’s Death?*

*“Time passed and under the presidency of Lazaro Cardenas (1934-1940), the Zapatista tradition regained life and vigor with the nationwide implementation of agrarian reform. Mainly during this administration, 67 million hectares owned by foreign or Mexican corporations were expropriated, and in addition to the land peasants received credits, education, and the means to organize their work. The economy and population had begun their accelerating rise; agricultural production multiplied while the whole country underwent modernization and industrialization. Cities expanded and the consumer market grew in breadth and depth.”*

*“But Mexican nationalism did not lead to socialism and consequently, like other countries that failed to take the decisive step, Mexico did not fully achieve its goals of economic independence and social justice. The million dead in the revolutionary war years had paid blood tribute “to a Huitzilopochtli more cruel and insatiable than the one our ancestors worshipped: the capitalist development of Mexico under conditions imposed by subordination to imperialism...Collectively owned ejido land is continually being partitioned, and along with multiplication of minifundios---which themselves become steadily more fragmented---a new type of latifundio system, and a new agrarian bourgeoisie engaged in large-scale commercial farming, have made their appearance. Local landlords and entrepreneurs, who have achieved a dominant position by trampling on the letter and spirit of the law, are in turn dominated: a recent book classifies them with the words “and Co.” attached to Anderson, Clayton. In the same book, Lazaro Cardenas’s son writes that “the camouflaged latifundios have been established, when possible, on the best and most productive lands.”” (ibid. p. 124, par. 3, sel. parts, p. 125 par. 1)*

## *Let’s Look At Another Central American Nation: Guatemala*

An underage Guatemalan immigrant worker, Osiel Lopez Perez, lost his leg in an industrial accident while working (illegally, he was underage) at Case Farms. As reported by Michael Grabell in the May 8, 2017 *New Yorker Magazine*, “A year earlier, after gang members shot his mother and tried to kidnap his sisters, he left his home, in the mountainous

village of Tectitan, and sought asylum in the United States.” As previously covered by William Blum in his work **KILLING HOPE: U.S. MILITARY AND CIA INTERVENTIONS SINCE WORLD WAR II**, Guatemala from the late 1960s to the late 1980s has been under the clandestine “care” of the CIA and U.S. military. In eleven pages under the title **“37. Guatemala 1962 to 1980s”** Blum goes on to document how this “care” brought about genocidal conditions in Guatemala. I will quote his opening paragraphs.

“Indians tell harrowing stories of village raids in which their homes have been burned, men tortured hideously and killed, women raped, and scarce crops destroyed. It is Guatemala’s final solution to insurgency: only mass slaughter of the Indians will prevent them joining a mass uprising . [he quotes this from *The Guardian* (London) 22 December 1983]

“This newspaper item appeared in 1983. Very similar stories have appeared many times in the world press since 1966, for Guatemala’s “final solution” has been going on rather longer than the more publicized one of the Nazis.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the misery of the mainly Indian peasants and urban poor of Guatemala who make up three-quarters of the population of this beautiful land so favored by American tourists. The particulars of their existence derived from the literature of this period sketch a caricature of human life. In a climate where everything grows, very few escape the daily ache of hunger or the progressive malnutrition...almost half the children die before the age of five...the leading cause of death in the country is gastro-enteritis. Highly toxic pesticides sprayed indiscriminately by airplanes, at times directly onto the heads of peasants, leave a trail of poisoning and death...public health services in rural areas are virtually non-existent...the same for public education...near-total illiteracy. **A few hundred families possess almost all the arable land...**thousands of families without land, without work, jammed together in communities of cardboard and tin houses, with no running water or electricity, sea of mud during the rainy season, sharing their bathing and toilet with the animal kingdom. Men on coffee plantations earning 20 cents or 50 cents a day, living in circumstances closely resembling concentration camps...looked upon by other Guatemalans more as beasts of burden than humans. “A large plantation to sell,” reads the advertisement, “with 200 hectares and 300 Indians”...this, then is what remained of the ancient Mayas, whom the American archeologist Sylvanus Morely had called the most splendid indigenous people on the planet.” [**KILLING HOPE**, p. 229, par. 3-5, *emphasis mine*]

“In March 1982, a coup put General Efraim Rios Montt, a “born-again Christian” in power...In his first six months in power, 2,600 Indians and peasants were massacred, while during his 17-month reign, more than 400 villages were brutally wiped off the map.” [KILLING HOPE, p.238, par. 2] “...the malnutrition, ignorance, sickness of the vast majority of the Guatemalan population, is the direct result of a capitalist system that makes the Indian compete against the powerful and well-armed landowner...” (Thomas Melville, 1968) [ibid. p. 238, par. 5] “In 1981...the toll of people murdered by the government since 1954 had reached the 60,000 mark, and the sons of one-time death-squad members were now killing the sons of the Indians killed by their fathers...” [p.238, par. 3] William Blum’s account of Guatemala (pp. 229-239) in his work “KILLING HOPE: U.S. MILITARY AND CIA INTERVENTIONS SINCE WORLD WAR II” ends in 1995. As of 2016 relative political stability has apparently returned to Guatemala, as well as a democratic government. There is no more “communist threat” excuse for the CIA to wage war (in favor of American big business) in the Guatemalan nation. In 2016 their newest elected president, Jimmy Morales, came to power under the right-wing party of the National Convergence Front, and he identifies as a nationalist. He is both a conservative (not a socialist) and an Evangelical Christian. In college he majored in business administration and theology. **He denies that a genocide against the Ixil Maya took place.** Probably due to his close alliance with the United States, he maintains this denial. **There is something terribly disturbing about the flag-waving political stance taken both here and in the United States by Evangelical Christians, who are willing to blatantly deny the genocides committed by their respective governments ever occurred.** As evidence of Jimmy Morales’ close alliance with Washington, he announced a decision to move the Guatemalan Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, after US President Donald Trump made a similar announcement on December 6, 2017. While I find nothing wrong with this as a Christian myself, I am merely showing Jimmy Morales’ close alliance with Washington, and probably American aid dollars. Guatemala, like many Latin American nations, has gone through a long period of social chaos, and yes, genocides, some of which the United States is directly responsible for. So genuine political refugees, asylum seekers from Latin America continue to head for the United States’ border, driven there by “the problem” we created, which drives them here.

As Michael Grabell continues in his article, which highlights the plight of some of these Guatemalan Mayan Indians, “While the President [Donald Trump] stirs up fears about Latino immigrants and refugees, he ignores the role companies, particularly the poultry and meatpacking industry, have played in bringing these immigrants to the Midwest and Southwest.

The newcomers' arrival in small, mostly white cities experiencing industrial decline in turn helped foment the economic and ethnic anxieties that brought Trump to office. Osiel ended up in Ohio by following a generation of indigenous Guatemalans, who have been the backbone of Case Farms' since 1989, when a manager drove a van down to the orange groves and tomato fields around Indiantown, Florida, and came back with the company's first load of Mayan refugees." Mr. Grabell says "Case Farms are among the most dangerous work places in America." But these poor Mayan refugees fear to speak up, fearing management will call I.C.E., threatening them with deportation at the worst, or loss of employment at the very least. The next question is a moral one...

*Mr. President, Should We Be Building A Wall Between Mexico  
And Our Southern Border?*

Mexico, like all the rest of Latin America, came under the control of U.S. imperialism, U.S. Big Business controlling much of Mexican industry and large agri-farms, made up the majority of farmland in Mexico. That was up to the writing of "**Open Veins of Latin America**" in 1970. It would be interesting to take a good look at Mexico today, to see how much of this is still true. Hugo Chavez was able to wrest control away from American business sponsored imperialism for Venezuela in recent times, up until his death, although who is in control there now is another question that needs investigating. Essentially, we are directly responsible for the failed nation of Venezuela, where right now its starving citizens are eating dogs, cats, rats and flamingos, anything they can get their hands on. Parents are going without meals so that their children can eat (cf. "Open Veins of Latin America," pp. 165-170). We, the United States of America, are also directly responsible for all the other failing Latin American nations, especially in Central America. This is right now, 2017. ***And Mexico, Mr. President, should we be building a wall between Mexico and our Southern border?—trying to hold back those millions of poor from all over Latin America—people whose poverty we've been directly responsible for? Or should we be doing something more humanitarian toward Mexico and the other Latin American nations with that 20 billion dollars you want to spend on a wall, based on what you've just read?*** As we can plainly see from these quotes, American imperialistic muscle, military covert BlackOps, and American big business have created virtual slave colonies out of much of Latin America's population, going back as far as 1845 in Mexico. And this wasn't the South, this was U.S. policy from Washington D.C. and Wall Street, from the North. And as William Blum has brought out in his encyclopedic work "**KILLING HOPE: U.S. MILITARY AND CIA INTERVENTIONS SINCE WORLD WAR II**" this U.S.

imperialistic enforced slavery over Latin America has continued at least up into the 1990s, and may even continue today. ***So do we build a wall and forget about what we've done to create the problem? Is a wall the right answer, Mr. President?***

For further reading:

What has the United States become since 1945? An American Empire, the Modern Romans. Don't believe me? See, <http://www.unityinchrist.com/topical%20studies/America-ModernRomans1.htm>

<http://www.unityinchrist.com/WhyPovertyandStarvationInLatinAmerica.html>

*Why Poverty and Starvation in Latin America* En Espanol:

<http://www.unityinchrist.com/Poverty/OpenVeinsLA-EnEspanol.pdf>

***“Open Veins of Latin America, five centuries of the pillage of a continent”*** by Eduardo Galeano, forward by Isabel Allende

**“KILLING HOPE: U.S. MILITARY AND CIA INTERVENTIONS SINCE WORLD WAR II”** by William Blum

Note: As of 1971 when Eduardo Galeano wrote this, where does Mexico stand? Let's review a quote from pages 125-126 of his book *Open Veins of Latin America*, ***“Mexico did not fully achieve its goals of economic independence and social justice.*** The million dead in the revolutionary war years had paid blood tribute to a Huitzilopochtli more cruel and insatiable than the one our ancestors worshipped: the capitalist development of Mexico under conditions imposed by subordination to imperialism. The fading of the bright banners [of the Mexican revolution] has been studied by a variety of scholars. Edmundo Flores writes in an official publication that “at the present time, 60 percent of Mexico's total population has incomes below \$120 a year and goes hungry [this written in 1971]. Eight million Mexicans consume almost nothing but beans, corn, tortillas, and chilis. The Tlatelolco massacre of some 500 students in 1968 is not the only evidence of the system's deep contradictions. Using official figures, Alonso Aguilar concludes that Mexico has some 2 million landless peasants, 3 million children not attending school, around 11 million illiterates, and 5 million who have no shoes. Collectively owned *ejido* land is continually being partitioned, and along with the multiplication of minifundios—which themselves become steadily more fragmented—a new type of latifundio system, and a new agrarian bourgeoisie engaged in large-scale

commercial farming, have made their appearance. Local landlords and entrepreneurs, who have achieved a dominant position by trampling on the letter and spirit of the law, are in turn dominated: a recent book classifies them within the words “and Co.” attached to Anderson, Clayton.” In the same book, Lazaro Cardenas’s son writes that “the camouflaged latifundios have been established, when possible, on the best and most productive lands. Novelist Carlos Fuentes has reconstructed, in reverse chronological order, the life of a captain in Carranza’s army [Carranza, first President during and after the revolution, responsible for the assassination of Emiliano Zapata] who, in war and then in peace, uses gun and cunning to make his way to the top. A man of humble origin, Artemio Cruz sheds the idealism and heroism of his youth as the years pass: he helps himself to land, founds and multiplies businesses, gets a seat in the Congress, and climbs the shining steps to the peaks of society, accumulating wealth, power, and prestige by wheeling and dealing, bribery, speculation, audacity, and the bloody repression of the Indians. ***His pilgrim’s progress resembles that of the potently impotent party of the Mexican revolution which virtually monopolizes the country’s political life in our time. Both have fallen upward [while the peasant farmers and workers have fallen downward].*** [emphasis mine]

According to Eduardo Galeano, the lofty ideals of the Mexican revolution under Emiliano Zapata and Pancho Villa were muted by big business concerns, much of those coming from North of the Rio Grande.. But it’s obvious American big business, Wall Street has, up to 1971, seduced the ruling revolutionary political party which controlled the Mexican government into making the genuine reforms of Zapata more or less null and void, also making the famous Constitution of 1917 ineffective in the land-reforms it sought to bring about. Has Mexico changed much since Galeano wrote this? I don’t know, that’s a good question.

List of Mexican Presidents from the middle of the Mexican revolution to 1940:

1915-1920, Carranza. (his agents assassinate Emiliano Zapata, Pancho Villa retires)

1920-1924, Alvaro Obregon

1924-1928 Plutarco Elias Calles

1928-1934, interim presidents

1934-1940, Lazaro Cardenas