**Mexico Solidarity Project**

***“America, America, God shed his grace on thee,***

***And crown thy good with brotherhood from sea to shining sea.”***

 America the Beautiful

The US imperialist myth is fed to us as pablum as soon as we enter kindergarten. Can the US claim to be “America,” or does this conflation signal its intent to eat up all of the Americas? Was it God’s intention, or that of US capitalists, to extend US domination from the Atlantic to the Pacific? Do “goodness” and “brotherhood” characterize US relations with the peoples here before the colonizers, or do genocide and land grabs more accurately describe these relations?

The ideology cunningly rendered in “America the Beautiful” is manifest in the two-thousand-mile border from Tijuana/Imperial Beach to Matamoros/Brownsville. Before the Mexican-American War, the US and México were roughly the same size, and México’s Afro-Mestizo president, Vicente Guerrero, had outlawed slavery. In 1846, just 19 years after that fact, the US used lies to justify waging a war against México that was so blatantly a pretext for domination that Irish-American troops in the US Army switched sides and fought with the Mexicans. Superior military force led to the annexation of 40% of México: the states of Alta California, Nevada, Arizona, Nuevo México, Texas, Utah, and parts of Colorado and Wyoming. Whether slavery would be permitted in the newly acquired territories was a matter of contention.

The 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo laid out the new border lines. It also details that upon the establishment of the new political boundary between the United States and México, all Mexican@s may travel freely into the United States, that upon entry they have the right to remain, to become US citizens, to own land, to bear arms, to vote in elections, and have the right to a free education *in the language of their choice*. Those rights sound good - but those clauses were as worthless as all the treaties the United States made with the Indian nations. A greatly reduced Mexico, kept on a leash by the US, never recovered.

**Cross-Border Resistance**

Mexican revolutionary leaders and intellectuals have had connections to both countries since before the 1910 Mexican Revolution. During the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz, the revolutionary anarchists Enrique and Ricardo Flores Magón organized social movements to end the 31 years of the *Porfiriato*, and to promote revolutionary consciousness of their people *in both countries*. The newspaper of their Party (the Mexican Liberal Party) *Regeneración,* was read in much of México and the US Southwest. In 1917, the Magón brothers found themselves in LA County Jail on charges of having co-written *The Manifesto to the Anarchists of the Entire World and to the Workers in General,* which asserted that México no longer belonged to the Mexican people, but to the American railroads, oil companies and sugar interests underwriting the dictatorship of Díaz. Charged with espionage and sedition, Ricardo Magón died in Leavenworth Federal Prison in Kansas in 1922.

Influenced by the rise of Black revolutionary nationalism in the US, the ebb and flow of cross-border organizing became a flood once again in the 1960’s. Chican@ activists identified with and defined the occupied area that was part of México until 1848 as Aztlán, a nation that developed over more than a century of land theft, occupation, discrimination, and resistance: annexation didn’t just subordinate Mexico to the US, it subordinated Chican@s/Mexican@s caught on the US side of the new border to the mandates of white supremacist rule. Chican@/Mexican@ unity in the struggle against capitalism and oppression in El Norte, and in support of movements in México, generated the formation of Chican@-led socialist organizations in the sixties through the eighties, a time when Marxist analysis and its internationalist perspective was the ideological grounding for much radical activism. ATM (August 29th Movement), in which many of today’s older activists cut their teeth, grew out of the massive 1970 demonstration, the Chicano Moratorium Against the War in Vietnam. Many Chicana and Chicano leaders have shared histories in the Black Liberation and Civil Rights movements. For example, Betita Martínez, author of *500 Years of Chicano History*, began her decades of organizing with SNCC (Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee) in the sixties.

In 1994, the Zapatista uprising exploded onto the world stage. As Emiliano Zapata had long been a symbol of resistance for Chican@s, the uprising struck a deep chord and sparked the organizing of EZLN solidarity committees (all over the world). In México, the Zapatistas gave rise to the most profound social movement against injustice and racism in México since the 1910 Revolution.

**The current situation**

Unfortunately, most of these organizations did not survive to the present. With increased global integration and in the face of increasingly powerful racist, neo-liberal right-wing movements around the world, organizing that addresses issues that connect across borders, builds Black/Brown unity and action, and works from the foundational goal of winning the masses to socialism is needed more than ever. Yes, there are many organizations that support the rights of migrants at our Southwest border and the rights of Latin@s in the US - but few have an openly leftist politics nor the goal of building the socialist left; revolutionary activism has subsided as the NGOization of struggle has caused fragmentation and reformism.

*This is a moment where revolutionary socialist analysis and activism is an imperative. México could introduce a new socialist politics for all of the Americas. However, that cannot happen without support from Chican@s and Mexican@s and their allies in both countries and beyond.*

**Today’s Imperative: Cross-border solidarity work**

No country in the world will influence the movement for social transformation in the US more than México. Right now, border issues give definition to the stark choice faced by the people of the US: does the US remain a bastion of white supremacy and growing economic and racial inequality? Or can it become a nation that provides economic, social, political, spiritual, and cultural security for all? Barbarism or socialism?

The next few years will be critical for México. Numerous left governments in Latinoamérica were elected over the last decades but have since been defeated. There is new reason for hope in Mexico. Social movements, disgusted by the growing impoverishment of the people and the corruption of the government, are the base for AMLO’s party, Morena (Movimiento de Regeneración Nacional). In 2014, by democratic vote of its members, Morena registered as an official political party and began to organize the presidential campaign for AMLO. Just four years later, AMLO was elected México’s president, and Morena candidates won overwhelming majorities in both México’s congress and senate! These victories were the result of a developed electoral strategy and the work of a structure of disciplined militants in all 31 states of the country. Defying the power of the dominant parties, Morena created a successful consensus for change.

But, as we have seen, progressive victories can be short-lived when economic and political pressure from the US is applied - as it always is - to leaders who defy US hegemony. We must connect with leftists in Latinoamérica, protect AMLO from US sabotage, and support all progressive movements in and out of Morena. This includes the Zapatistas and indigenous movements which opposed AMLO. The role of the US left is to create as much breathing room as possible for Mexican movements to determine their own futures; we do so by challenging the US government to back off its economic and political threats, and to end its Monroe Doctrine “big brother” policies that deny sovereignty to neighbor countries.

To achieve these goals, US left and progressives people and organizations will need to join together. A Solidarity Project requires a broad coalition of national and local forces.

 **Plan of Action to Develop the Solidarity Project**

1.  Identify individuals and organizations around the USA who want to build solidarity with the people of México. Construct a core committee of socialist and other progressive organizations and individual activists from the US and México to guide the Project.

2. Establish a relationship with Morena.

3. Connect to and learn from social movement activists in Mexico as to what strategic issues and actions they are taking and ask us to take. Solidarity means support for the social movements that brought Morena into being, as well as revolutionary forces such as the Zapatistas.

4. Published a bi-lingual bi-national Bulletin. Our goal is to become the trusted source of information on México that is not filtered through the lens of the mainstream press. We examine the historical relationship between the US and Mexico, the political balance of forces today, the cultural differences and similarities between the US and México; the Bulletin features interviews with mostly working class people from both sides of the border.

5. Through interviews and stories, express why the capitalist system in general and US imperialism in particular are the obstacles to the well-being of people on both sides of the border, of migrants, and of the descendants of Mexican@s in the US.

6. Promote the excellent work and demands of groups fighting for the rights of Mexicans, Mexicanos, and Chicanos in both countries and on the border.

7. Mount concrete solidarity campaigns. Currently, to support independent union organizing among auto workers in México, a committee has been formed that has organized support for SINTTIA at GM Silao, and will continue to organize worker-to-worker solidarity.