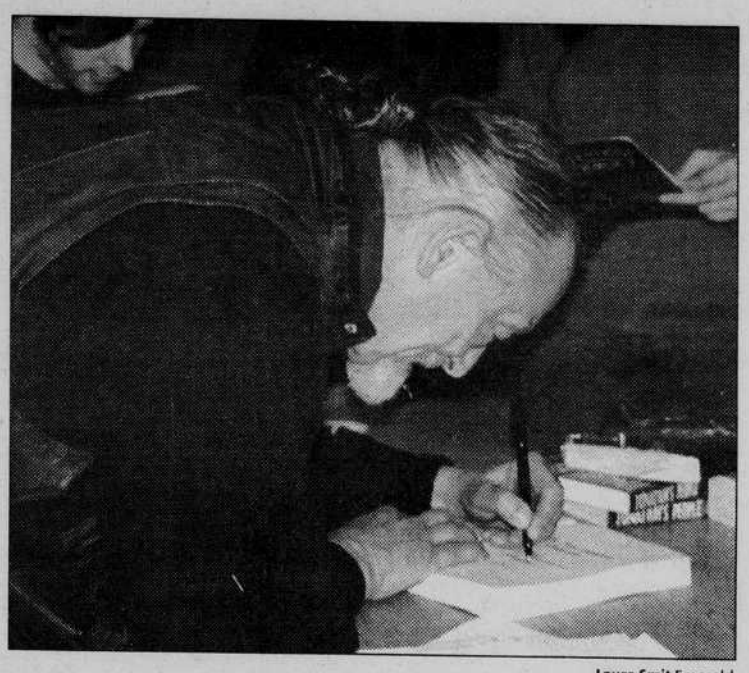

Laura Smit Emerald

Following his lecture at Willamette Hall on the Zapatist revolution in Mexico, John Ross signs his new book, "The War Against Oblivion: Zapata Chronicles 1994-2000."

Zapatistas

continued from page 1

cional (EZLN)CQ, which translates into the army of national liberation. This was the beginning of the Zapatista movement.

"It was preparing itself for a war against the government," Ross said. "This was a time of liberation."

The second section of Ross's book "the time of talking guns" describes the 1994 uprising prior to the Mexican elections, when the Zapatistas made themselves visible to the country, by initiating massive protests and a war against the government. Ross said this portion also depicts the massacres that occurred in this period and how the war affected Chiapas citizens.

Ross conveyed the Zapatista's distrust of the electoral system and government by quoting their chants to Mexican president Vicente Fox when he got elected: "If you fail us, we will take you out of power."

Ross also spoke about the current "time of silence and blood." For the last 18 months, the Zapatista haven't been heard from, the author said. In this time, they haven't conducted any protests or communicated with the government. Ross offered a few explanations for this, which included the possibility of the Zapatista "just waiting for something concrete to happen."

Leonardo Garcia-Pabon, chair for the Latin American Studies program, said the information Ross presented might change many people's viewpoints about Mexico and expose them to important issues that have been hidden.

"Some people are unaware of the history," he said. "Many people see Mexico as a tourism place — this shows that there's much more than that."

Jeff Parker, a junior history major, said the presentation revealed information he thinks isn't publicized enough in the media.

> *"I got a better feel of the politics involved with the Mexican government and the challenges that the Mexicans face.*
>
> **Jeff Parker**
> junior
> History

"I got a better feel of the politics involved with the Mexican government and the challenges that the Mexicans face," he said.

Ross has recently been touring the west coast to present his book and to share the details of Zapatista history to students and community members.

"My attachment is to social movements and change," he said. "And I need to bring this story to my own country."

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