

### Rose-Anne Auguste - Reebok Human Rights Award Winner

A Reebok 1994 Human Rights Awards winner is *Rose-Anne Auguste*, a nurse and human rights activist in Haiti. *Rose-Anne* founded the only private clinic in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, that makes health care available to the poor. Located in a slum area of Port-au-Prince, the clinic treats 200-300 people a day, many of whom have been the victims of politically motivated violence.

*Woman in Action*

### 'The First Zapatista Uprising was led by a Woman'

'Susanna, a Tzotzil, is angry. They were making fun of her a while ago. The other members of the **Clandestine Revolutionary Indigenous Committee (CCRI)** were saying that she was to blame for the first Zapatista Army uprising in Mexico, back in March 1993.

Last year Susanna had the job of making the rounds of dozens of communities, speaking with groups of women to pull their ideas together into the 'Women's Law' proposal. When the CCRI met to vote on the laws Susanna had the job of reading the proposals that brought together the thoughts of thousands of indigenous women. As she began to



Photo from *Radical America*, Vol. 19, No. 4, 1985

read, the assembly began to get more and more restless, comments broke out all around. Susanna didn't flinch and charged ahead, "We want to have the (number of) children we want and can care for. We want the right to have leadership positions in the community. We want the right to have our say and that it be respected. We want the right to study, and even become drivers."



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The 'Women's Laws' that Susanna had just read meant for the indigenous communities a real revolution. The women leaders were still getting the translations of what Susanna had said (in) their own languages. Almost at the same time the translators finished the companeros began applauding unanimously, the women leaders were singing and the guys were scratching their heads.

This is the story that came out, Susanna now tells me, when someone in the CCRI read a newspaper article that said that the proof that the EZLN wasn't authentically indigenous is that they couldn't have got together to agree to launch their uprising on the first of January. Someone joked that the first uprising wasn't in January, but back in March. It's true: the first uprising of the EZLN was in March of 1993, and it was led by the Zapatista women. They won, with no casualties. That's the way things are around here (Cosas de estas tierras)...."

Source: 'Extract of a letter from *Subcommandante Marcos* to the national newspaper *La Jornada* in Mexico City, January 1994 in *Radical America*, Vol. 25 No 2, June 1994, 1 Summer Street, Somerville, MA 02143-9983, USA.