

## Interview of Pedro Sosa, American Friends Service Committee

by John Alcott, Eugene Friends Meeting

September 25, 2022

- 00:01 John Alcott “I am John Alcott. I'm here at the Nobel Peace Park in Eugene, Oregon, on September 25, 2022, and I am working with Pedro Sosa, the staff member for American Friends Service Committee. American Friends Service Committee was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1947.
- 00:27 “And it's my opportunity to talk with Pedro now about how Friends-Quakers and everyone can help in his work in helping migrants, immigrants who are coming from Central America and all over the world to Oregon.
- Pedro, thank you for being here today. Can you say how we could best help you in your work?
- 00:59 Pedro Sosa: “ First of all, thank you very much for the invitation and to share these couple words with you. I think the most important right now for us as a Quaker organization is to continue the legacy of AFSC. And part of that is the Immigrant Rights program which I am part of in the Northwest.
- 01:25 “I think the Quaker community can help us , be involved, is maybe to be a donor, or one will participate as a volunteer in our different events we have and also to be on our list( of friends and supporters.) And we can send that updates weekly or every couple of weeks so you can see in which events you can participate.
- 01:58 “You can help maybe in the events we have every year that we started a couple of years ago and this is “Free Them All.” It's basically to educate the community about the incarceration of people. They make lots of profit on this, on incarceration of immigrants. We don't want it to continue with this.
- 02:27 “And as this organization (AFSC) will be glad for us as Quakers to participate and stop this mass incarceration. We must stop this Incarceration machine because it's not okay to continue this.
- 02:56 “It's dehumanizing, . . . dehumanizing people to have the Incarceration making profit on the suffering of community. Another (way) maybe youth can participate also. We have projects and we can discuss with them, to have projects like one maybe next year we're

- going to have is the research on the causal roots of migration, the recent migration, like the caravans.
- 03:30 “We need to understand that. And also, as a community in the US, we need to educate ourselves about why we (immigrants) come here. It's the same as our ancestors came to this land since 1492, when first immigrants came to this land. It's the same reason why recent immigrants are coming to this land. But why we forgot that, why we forgot our ancestor came for the same reason. We should support recent immigrants.
- 04:05 “(We can) share our home, share our food, just be part of the community. I think the biggest thing is to . . . have Diversity!  
“Diversity. We need to build a diversity community. We are all human. We have just one God and we need to be as brothers and sister to be together.
- 04:34 “I think that's one of the my thinking is how you can be on board of the AFSC program in the Northwest US.
- John Allcott, “Yes. Pedro, gracias. And may I ask, possibly your ancestors were here in the States, in the country, in Central America long, long before any of my people might have come from Europe?
- 05:04 “And so I'm just pleased to share with you, being an immigrant to America, to the United States.
- Pedro Sosa “ Yeah. As indigenous people. I am Maya Kiche from Guatemala, and we are not considered ourselves as migrants in this land because our ancestors were living here for thousands and thousands of years.
- 05:37 “I think immigration started 1492. As indigenous, we don't consider as immigrants in our own continent, in our own land. But the truth right now, they make us, like, strange in our own community. We have to educate the community about that, the real migration.
- 06:06 “We have to understand the first immigrants who came to this land, what they have done. And, yeah, we have to educate ourselves as indigenous. I'm not considered myself as immigrant in this country. This is our land.
- John Allcott, “Thank you, Pedro. Appreciate your time. I think you also have a new assistant, is that right?
- Pedro Sosa, “Yes, Alonzo (Oliveros), new staff in the Salem office.

06:36

I'm happy to have him because he knows about the program. We've been working together for a few years when he was working with Causa, and he knows the work. I'm glad that he joined our AFSC team. He's on board now. A couple months ago he started.

John Allcott, "Thank you, Pedro. Sosa.

Pedro Sosa, "You're welcome. Thank you, to you, John.

07:06

JA and PS, "Adios. Adios.