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******************** THIS IS A COMBINED MESSAGE ********************

BODY
COUNTRY: (U) MEXICO (MX).


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SOURCE:  (U) DAILY MEXICO CITY NEWSPAPER, "EXCELSIOR", 940408, IN SPANISH.

SUMMARY:  (C/REL-UK,CAN,AUS) NEWSPAPER ARTICLE/ESSAY DETAILS PAST AND CURRENT ROLE PLAYED BY THE MEXICAN ARMY AND MEXICAN AIR FORCE IN SUPPORT OF THE NATION.


BEGIN TRANSLATION.

THE MEXICAN ARMY, MORE THAN ANY OTHER INSTITUTION IN OUR SOCIETY, IS A PRODUCT OF THE MOST IMPORTANT POLITICAL AND SOCIAL OCCURRENCE IN MEXICO DURING THIS CENTURY THE REVOLUTION OF 1910. IF IT IS CORRECT TO SAY THAT ALL ASPECTS OF MEXICAN SOCIETY WERE AFFECTED, UP TO A CERTAIN POINT, BY THAT MOVEMENT, THEN IT IS SAFE TO SAY THAT THE MILITARY ITSELF, WAS REVISED FROM TOP TO BOTTOM. IN EFFECT, TODAY'S MEXICAN MILITARY DERIVES FROM THE REVOLUTION OF 1910, AND IT IS A FACT THAT ITS CORPORATE IDENTITY AND TRADITIONS CONTINUE AS PART OF A REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT. THE SALIENT FEATURE OF THE STUDENT OR ANALYST OF THE MEXICAN ARMY IS ITS CLOSE IDENTIFICATION AND TIES TO THE REVOLUTION AND THE MEXICAN PEOPLE, WHO WERE UNITED UNDER THE PROTECTION OF THE MILITARY UMBRELLA AS A RESULT OF THAT REVOLUTION.

THE REVOLUTION EXPLAINS MANY OF THE PECULIARITIES OF THE ARMY AND THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP THAT HAS DEVELOPED BETWEEN MEXICO'S CIVILIAN AND MILITARY AUTHORITIES. THE REVOLUTION PRODUCED ITS OWN MYTHOLOGY, PART OF IT FOUND ON FACTS, PART ON HEARSAY. ONE OF THE MOST INTERESTING MYTHS THAT CHARACTERIZES IT, AND OTHER REVOLUTIONS, IS ITS
POPULAR ORIGINS.

THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE REVOLUTION INTRODUCES NEW SOCIAL PATTERNS TO THE FLOW OF MEXICAN LIFE, PATTERNS THAT THEMSELVES FEED AN ECLECTIC IDEOLOGY STRONGLY INCORPORATED WITHIN THE CONSTITUTION OF 1917 AND TO THE LATER DEVELOPMENT OF POWER WHICH FOLLOWED IN THE 1920'S. IN TERMS OF SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE, THE MOST IMPORTANT CONSEQUENCE OF THE REVOLUTION WAS TO GIVE TO NUMEROUS INDIVIDUALS — ESPECIALLY THOSE FROM RURAL AND WORKING CLASS BACKGROUNDS — OPPORTUNITIES TO ENTER INTO CAREERS IN PUBLIC LIFE AND THE ARMY FROM THE GEOGRAPHIC WELL OF THE MILITARY ELITE.


FIVE NATIONAL POLITICIANS OR GENERALS OF THE ARMY CAME FROM RURAL AREAS. **THE KEY TO UNDERSTANDING THE MILITARY'S CURRENT CONCENTRATION OF SERVING OFFICERS WITH URBAN BEGINNINGS, IS AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE OFFICER SELECTION PROCESS. THE TEST IS OFFERED AT ONLY EIGHT REGIONAL TESTING SITES YEARLY; THESE ARE EIGHT OF MEXICO'S LARGEST URBAN AREAS, AS ONE WOULD EXPECT. THE HIGHER EDUCATIONAL LEVELS ATTAINED IN THE CITIES AND THE COST OF TRAVEL AND MAINTENANCE OF THE TESTEE DURING THE PROCESS RESULTS IN AN OFFICER CORPS SKewed TOWARD AN URBAN BACKGROUND.**

THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION EXPANDED BRIEFLY THE GEOGRAPHIC WELL FROM WHICH WAS EXTRACTED THE CIVILIAN AND MILITARY ELITE, INFLUENCING ALSO ITS SOCIAL ORIGIN. CONTRARY TO MYTH, THE MAJORITY OF THE SUCCESSFUL MILITARY AND CIVILIAN LEADERS THAT THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION PRODUCED HAD ROOTS IN THE MIDDLE CLASS.

**HERMETISM TOWARD CIVILIAN INTRUSION**

IN FACT, IN EACH ADMINISTRATION SINCE 1920 — EXCEPTING THAT OF LAZARO CARDENAS — TWO THIRDS OR MORE OF THE LEADING CIVILIAN UPPER CLASS HAS COME FROM THE UPPER AND MIDDLE CLASS OF MEXICAN SOCIETY. IN SPITE OF THE FACT THAT MEXICAN GENERALS VERY LIKELY CAME FROM THE WORKING CLASS BETWEEN 1920 AND 1930, THEIR ORIGINS WERE INCREASINGLY FROM THE MIDDLE CLASS, IN NUMBERS COMPARABLE TO THAT OF THE CIVILIAN POLITICIANS.


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CAUSE. RATHER, THE MEXICAN MILITARY EDUCATION SYSTEM IS DESIGNED FOR THE MILITARY MAN, UNTIL THE WAR COLLEGE LEVEL, WHICH IS NORMALLY ATTENDED BY OFFICERS WITH AN AVERAGE OF 25 YEARS OF SERVICE. THE CADET ACADEMY IN MEXICO IS A HIGH SCHOOL, A SCHOOL WHICH DOES NOT ALLOW THE CIVILIAN ELITE TO MIX WITH THEIR MILITARY AGE GROUP PEERS. THE ONLY OFFICERS, OTHER THAN SPECIALISTS RECEIVING MEDICAL OR JUDICIAL TRAINING, TO RECEIVE A COLLEGE DIPLOMA ARE THE CGSC GRADUATES, ALSO NOT A COURSE DESIGNED TO RECEIVE CIVILIAN PEERS DURING THE COURSE OF INSTRUCTION. THUS, THE FIRST MILITARY EDUCATIONAL CONTACT WITH CIVILIAN POLITICAL ELITES OCCURS AT AN ADVANCED CAREER POINT. ALTHOUGH THE MILITARY IS REKOWNED FOR ITS PRIVACY AND THE SEAL TO OUTSIDERS, THAT IS NOT THE DETERMINING FACTOR HERE.)

CLOSED INSTITUTIONS

THE MILITARY, IN AN ATTEMPT TO REMAIN INTACT FROM CIVILIAN INTERFERENCE, BECAUSE OF POLITICAL-MILITARY INTERVENTION IN OTHER PLACES IN LATIN AMERICA, HAS SACRIFICED, UP TO A CERTAIN POINT, A WIDER RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CIVILIAN SECTOR OF SOCIETY.

THE MEXICAN MILITARY, UNLIKE THEIR CIVILIAN POLITICAL COUNTERPARTS, HAS ESTABLISHED ITS OWN INSTITUTIONS FOR TRAINING AND SHAPING THEIR FUTURE LEADERS. ALL THE OFFICERS IN THE ARMY ARE A PRODUCT OF MILITARY SCHOOLS WHERE THEY HAVE BEEN SINCE AGE 17, WHEN THEY ENROLLED IN THE HEROIC MILITARY COLLEGE. FOLLOWING THAT COMES EVEN MORE ADVANCED COURSES OF TRAINING AT THE SUPERIOR WAR COLLEGE, IF THEY ARE CONSIDERED ADEPT AT BECOMING HIGH LEVEL OFFICERS AND FINALLY, THEY GO TO THE NATIONAL DEFENSE COLLEGE BEFORE THEY BECOME GENERALS.

SINCE THE BODY OF OFFICERS, WITH FEW EXCEPTIONS, HAS BEEN TRAINED WITHIN A CONTROLLED MILITARY ENVIRONMENT, THEY DEVELOP A SET OF ATTITUDES AND VALUES THAT, ALTHOUGH THESE OFFICERS ARE A PART OF CIVILIAN SOCIETY, THEIR OUTLOOKS ARE DOMINATED BY THE MILITARY POINT OF VIEW. LOYALTY TO THE ARMY AS AN INSTITUTION, AND OBEDIENCE TO SUPERIORS ARE ALSO ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL MILITARY CAREER.

ON THE SURFACE, THE SOCIAL ORIGINS OF THE MILITARY APPEAR QUITE SIMILAR TO THAT OF THE CIVILIAN POLITICAL ELITE. NONETHELESS, IN SOME WAYS THEY ARE DIFFERENT. GIVEN THE DEMANDS OF A SUCCESSFUL MILITARY CAREER, AND THE UNUSUAL LEVEL OF INSTITUTIONAL LOYALTY, A GREAT PERCENTAGE OF FUTURE OFFICERS,
ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO OBTAIN ADVANCED MILITARY TRAINING IN ORDER TO ACCEDE TO THE RANK OF GENERAL, ARE FREQUENTLY SONS OR FAMILY MEMBERS OF OTHER OFFICERS. IN OTHER WORDS, A GREAT PORTION OF THE FUTURE ASPIRANTS TO THE BODY OF OFFICERS IN THE MEXICAN DEFENSE FORCES COME FROM A PRE-SELECTED WELL OF INDIVIDUALS.

THE TWO GROUPS OF LEADERS ALSO DO NOT PRECISELY SHARE THE SAME SAME SOCIAL ORIGINS. ALTHOUGH BOTH COME FROM THE MIDDLE CLASS, THOSE ORIGINALLY OF LOWER CLASS ARE MORE FREQUENTLY FOUND AMONG THE MILITARY LEADERSHIP. THE REASON FOR THIS IS ESSENTIALLY ECONOMIC.

MANY INDIVIDUALS WHO DO NOT COME FROM MILITARY FAMILIES ENTER THE OFFICER CORPS AS A MEANS OF CLIMBING THE SOCIAL LADDER. ALSO, UNTIL 1944, THE MILITARY ALLOWED ENLISTED SOLDIERS, WHO HAD ATTAINED THE GRADE OF CORPORAL AND SERGEANT TO ATTEND THE HEROIC MILITARY COLLEGE. THEREFORE, THIS STRENGTHENED OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH MODEST ORIGINS.

POLITICAL AND MILITARY LEADERS.

TO SUMMARIZE, ACCEPTANCE AS A CADET IN ONE OF THE MILITARY ACADEMIES IS THE ROAD TO A HIGHER EDUCATIONAL LEVEL AND PROFESSIONAL STATUS. TO BE A SUCCESSFUL POLITICIAN, ONE SHOULD HAVE AN UNIVERSITY EDUCATION AND, NOWADAYS, POSTGRADUATE STUDIES. THE ARMY GUARANTEES AN EDUCATION ONCE THE INDIVIDUAL JOINS THE INSTITUTION, JUST LIKE THE CATHOLIC CHURCH OFFERS SEMINARY EDUCATION TO THEIR FUTURE PRIESTS AND BISHOPS. THE POLITICIAN, HOWEVER, HAS TO HAVE THESE CREDENTIALS (BEGIN BOLD-TYPE IN ARTICLE) "BEFORE" (END BOLD-TYPE) BEING CONSIDERED.


ALTHOUGH THE MILITARY LEADERSHIP CONTINUES SUBORDINATE TO CIVILIAN CONTROL, NUMEROUS TENSIONS EXIST BETWEEN THE TWO GROUPS OF LEADERS; TENSIONS THAT PARTLY COME FROM SEPARATIONS WHICH THE MILITARY THEMSELVES HAVE

THE TENSION BETWEEN THE TWO GROUPS OF LEADERS INCREASES IN TIMES OF POLITICAL CRISIS. THUS, THE SITUATION IN CHIAPAS HIGHLIGHTS ALREADY EXISTING PROBLEMS BETWEEN THE MILITARY AND CIVILIAN LEADERSHIP, AND THE MILITARY'S ABILITY TO RELATE TO THE SOCIETY IN GENERAL. THE MILITARY HAD ITS OWN STRATEGY TO DEAL WITH THE ZAPATISTA ARMY OF LIBERATION (EZLN), A STRATEGY THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF PRESIDENT CARLOS SALINAS DE GORTARI INITIALLY ACCEPTED. SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ANTONIO (RIVIELLO) BAZAN OPENLY CRITICIZED THE PRESIDENT AT HIS LOYALTY DAY SPEECH, AN UNPRECEDENTED ACT.)

THE CIVIL LEADERSHIP TURNED AGAINST THIS STRATEGY—HARD AND REPRESSIVE AS IT WAS—BEFORE THE INTENSE SCRUTINY OF THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS MEDIA AND HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS. THE POLITICAL LEADERSHIP, ESPECIALLY UNDER SALINAS DE GORTARI, HAS BEEN SENSITIVE TO THE TONE OF PUBLIC OPINION AND THE MASSIVE MEDIA IMAGES. IN FACT, IT HAS BECOME A VICTIM OF ITS OWN PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN AND ITS NATIONAL POLICY IN CHIAPAS IS BEING DIRECTED, TO A GREAT EXTENT, BY THE NECESSITY OF ADHERING TO A CERTAIN POLITICAL IMAGE.

POOR MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS
BY CONTRAST, THE MILITARY IS NOT ADAPTED TO MANAGE MEDIUMS OF COMMUNICATION. THE REASON FOR THIS IS TWO FOLD:

- FIRST, THE DESIRE FOR AUTONOMY THAT IS REFLECTED IN THE MILITARY'S SECRETIVE AND PROTECTIVE INSTITUTIONAL POSTURE, IS GUARANTEED BY THE CIVILIAN LEADERSHIP THAT ACTS AS A CENSOR FOR THE PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF MILITARY AFFAIRS. THE CIVILIAN LEADERSHIP INTERVENES BETWEEN THE MILITARY AND THE NEWS MEDIA IN MATTERS PERTAINING TO MILITARY POLICY. MOREOVER, THERE DO NOT EXIST MILITARY ANALYSTS IN MEXICO, WHICH IS TO SAY, CIVILIANS WITH SPECIALIZED INTERESTS AND EXPERIENCE IN DEALING WITH MILITARY ISSUES.

- SECOND, THE NATURALLY HERMETIC SOCIAL NATURE OF THE MEXICAN MILITARY IMPEDES THEIR ESTABLISHING A WIDE NETWORK OF CONTACTS AND LINKS WITH THE INTELLECTUAL WORLD, AND THAT OF THE NEWS MEDIA; LINKS THEY COULD USE TO AIR THEIR OWN VIEWPOINTS ABOUT POLITICAL MATTERS AND HELP STRENGTHEN THEIR OWN IMAGE. THE MILITARY IS IN THE PROCESS OF ADDRESSING THIS RATHER SEVERE SHORTCOMING BY SENDING PUBLIC RELATIONS EXCHANGE TEAMS ABROAD IN AN EFFORT TO DEVELOP A MORE MEANINGFUL, POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE MEDIA.)

THE ARMY HAS CONSIDERED ITSELF, FOR QUITE SOME TIME, A PRODUCT OF THE MEXICAN POPULACE: DERIVED FROM THE POPULAR CLASSES OF THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION. AND IT IS CERTAIN THAT IT CAN MAKE THIS CLAIM WITH GREATER LEGITIMACY THAN ANY OTHER LEADING GROUP.

NEVERTHELESS, IN THE YEARS TO COME, IT WOULD DO WELL TO CALL UPON ITSELF TO RE-EVALUATE ITS LOYALTY TO THE MEXICAN PEOPLE, SUCH AS THE COUNTRY'S CIVILIAN LEADERS ARE DOING AT THIS MOMENT. BY MEANS OF RE-EVALUATING WHAT ITS RELATIONSHIP TO MEXICAN SOCIETY SHOULD BE, THE MEXICAN MILITARY WILL NEED TO OPEN ITSELF UP TO GREATER PUBLIC SCRUTINY AND THEREBY ENHANCE ITS SOCIAL IMAGE.

END OF TRANSLATION.

COMMENTS: 1. (C/REL UK,CAN,AUS) THIS EXCELLENT ARTICLE "SAYS IT LIKE IT IS", AND PAINTS A GOOD COMMON-SENSE PICTURE OF HOW THE MEXICAN ARMY'S THOUGHT PROCESS AND COMPORTMENT WERE DEVELOPED. WE SHOULD HOPE THE LEADERSHIP OF THE MEXICAN ARMY READS AND UNDERSTANDS THE VERY ACCURATE MESSAGE WHICH THIS ARTICLE CONVEYS. WE SHOULD FURTHER HOPE THAT AN INFORMED PUBLIC READS AND UNDERSTANDS "WHY" THE

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MEXICAN ARMY IS THE WAY IT IS, AND THUS DOES IT OWN PART TO DRAW THE ARMY CLOSER INTO THE FOLD OF POPULAR SOCIETY

2. (C/REL-UK,CAN,AUS) IT IS INTERESTING TO OBSERVE THAT THE NEWSPAPER "EXCELSIOR" WHICH CARRIED THIS ARTICLE IS GENERALLY CONSIDERED A MOUTHPIECE TO DISSEMINATE THE OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT POSITION, AND THAT THE ADMINISTRATION APPEARS WILLING TO PUBLISH AN ARTICLE, THOUGH NOT PER SE CRITICAL OF THE MILITARY, IS UNABASHED IN ACCURATELY DESCRIBING THE ARMY'S CURRENT RELATIONSHIP WITH MEXICAN SOCIETY.

3. (C/REL-UK,CAN,AUS) IT IS ALSO INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT THIS EXCELLENT COMMENTARY WAS AUTHORED BY AN AMERICAN LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES PROFESSOR WHO RECENTLY PUBLISHED A LARGELY UNSATISFACTORY AND INACCURATE BOOK ON THE MEXICAN MILITARY. THE AUTHOR'S EXCELLENT AND WELL-DESERVED REPUTATION AS A MEXICAN POLITICAL SYSTEM OBSERVER CROSSED OVER INTO HIS WIDELY ACCEPTED RESEARCH ON THE MEXICAN MILITARY, AN UNWARRANTED ACCEPTANCE OF A WORK FULL OF INACCURACIES, AS ANY REPORTER WHO HAS IN FACT WORKED WITH AND BEEN Schooled WITH THE MEXICAN MILITARY CAN EASILY ATTEST.