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INQUIRE=DOC26D
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ENVELOPE

CDSN = LGX412 MCN = 94119/44669 TOR = 941192346
RTTCZYUW RUEKJCS4919 1192344 ~~CCCC~~--RUEALGX.
ZNY ~~CCCC~~

HEADER

R 292344Z APR 94
FM DIA WASHINGTON DC
INFO RUEADWD/OCSA WASHINGTON DC
RUENAAA/CNO WASHINGTON DC
RUEAHQA/CSAF WASHINGTON DC
RUEACMC/CMC WASHINGTON DC
RHLBAAK/CDRUSARSO MAXI FT CLAYTON PM//SOIN-IDI//
RUETIAQ/MPC FT GEORGE G MEADE MD
RUCBSAA/CINCUSACOM NORFOLK VA//J2//
RUCQVAB/USCINCSOC INTEL OPS CEN MACDILL AFB FL
RUEOFAA/COMJSOC FT BRAGG NC//J2//
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RULKQAN/MARCORINTACT DET QUANTICO VA
RUEALGX/SAFE
R 292311Z APR 94

TO RUEKJCS/DIA WASHDC
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC//ARA-MEX//
RUEAHQA/OSAF WASHDC//IAL//
RUEABNE/EPIC EL PASO TX
RULSJGA/COGARD INTELCOORDCEN WASHDC
RHLBAAA/USCINCSO QUARRY HTS PM//SCJ2//
RHCGRB/CINCFORSCOM FT MCPHERSON GA//FCJ2//
RULYSHH/COMMARFORLANT//G-2//

BT

CONTROLS

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SERIAL: (U) IIR [REDACTED]

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

BODY

COUNTRY: (U) MEXICO (MX).

SUBJECT: IIR [REDACTED] CHIAPAS: THE MEXICAN
ARMY TAKES FIRST STEP IN PUBLIC RELATIONS;
LOGISTICS/SUPPLY DEFICIENCIES (U).

WARNING: (U) THIS IS AN INFORMATION REPORT, NOT
FINALLY EVALUATED INTELLIGENCE. REPORT
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~~RELEASABLE TO UNITED KINGDOM, CANADA,
AUSTRALIA.~~

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

DOI: (U) 940423.

REQS: (U) 

SOURCE: (U) DAILY NEWSPAPER, "EXCELSIOR", MEXICO CITY, MEXICO, 940422, IN SPANISH.

SUMMARY: (U) THE MEXICAN ARMY TAKES ITS FIRST STEP IN PUBLIC RELATIONS BY INVITING REPORTERS TO THE 31ST MILITARY ZONE'S BASE. A REPORTER MAKES COMPARISONS BETWEEN THE EZLN AND MEXICAN ARMY'S LOGISTICS/SUPPLY. THE 31ST MILITARY ZONE COMMANDER MAKES PUBLIC REMARKS.

TEXT: 1. (U) THE MEXICAN ARMY TAKES ITS FIRST STEP IN PUBLIC RELATIONS BY INVITING REPORTERS TO RANCHO NUEVO, THE 31ST MILITARY ZONE'S BASE, FOR THE FIRST TIME. A REPORTER MAKES COMPARISONS BETWEEN THE EZLN AND MEXICAN ARMY'S LOGISTICS/SUPPLY. THE 31ST MILITARY ZONE COMMANDER MAKES PUBLIC REMARKS.

2. (U) THE REMARKS OF GENERAL JOSE RUBEN ((RIVAS)) PENA, THE NEW COMMANDER OF THE 31ST MILITARY ZONE, WERE REPORTED IN THE DAILY NEWSPAPER "EXCELSIOR", MEXICO CITY, MEXICO, 940422, IN SPANISH. THE FOLLOWING IS AN UNOFFICIAL TRANSLATION OF THE ARTICLE TITLED "THE MILITIA WILL SUPPORT A POLITICAL SOLUTION IN CHIAPAS: RIVAS P."; THE CORRESPONDENT IS MARTA ((ANAYA)).

SAN CRISTOBAL DE LAS CASAS, CHIAPAS, 22D OF APRIL. - THE CONFLICT IN CHIAPAS IS A PROBLEM BETWEEN MEXICANS; "FOR THAT REASON WE - THE MILITARY MEN - BELIEVE THAT A POLITICAL SOLUTION TO THE CHIAPAS CONFLICT MUST BE PURSUED BECAUSE WE ARE NOT CONFRONTING A FOREIGN AGGRESSOR", GENERAL JOSE RUBEN RIVAS PENA, COMMANDER OF THE 31ST MILITARY ZONE OF RANCHO NUEVO, DECLARED.

"ALL OF US WANT PEACE ... AND THE SOONER THE BETTER!", THE GENERAL DECLARED THIS MORNING AT A MEETING WITH A GROUP OF REPORTERS. THE REPORTERS WERE GIVEN A TOUR OF THE 31ST MILITARY ZONE HEADQUARTERS, WHICH GEN. RIVAS HAS COMMANDED SINCE 940401.

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THE GENERAL REJECTED SUB-COMMANDANTE MARCOS' ALLEGATIONS THAT THE MEXICAN ARMY WAS NOT ALLOWING FOOD AND MEDICINES TO ENTER THE ZAPATISTA HELD TERRITORY, "WE LET EVERYTHING PASS!" THE ONLY THING NOT ALLOWED TO PASS ARE ARMS AND GASOLINE; ESPECIALLY GASOLINE "FOR TACTICAL REASONS."

HE RECOGNIZED IN TURN THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EZLN'S STAND-DOWN FROM RED ALERT, ANNOUNCED YESTERDAY RO COMMENT: 940421, MEANT TO HIM -- THE INSURGENTS "HAVE THE WILL TO SEEK A POLITICAL SOLUTION."

REFERRING TO THE TIMES IN WHICH CHIAPAS IS LIVING THROUGH DURING THIS CEASEFIRE, THE BRIGADIER GENERAL INDICATED THAT "WE ARE IN A SITUATION WHICH IF NOT DELICATE, CERTAINLY INDICATES A TRANSITIONAL PERIOD, AND THERE IS SOME OF TENSION", BUT CONSIDERED THAT "IF WE OBSERVE THE EXPERIENCES OF OTHER CENTRAL AMERICAN COUNTRIES DURING PEACE TALKS, IT'S LOGICAL..." AND WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE ARMY-GOVERNMENT RELATIONS, AND THE ACCOUNTS OF POSSIBLE "FISSURES" BETWEEN THEM, THE GENERAL ANSWERED: "THE MEXICAN ARMY, WHICH COMES FROM THE PEOPLE, IS INSTITUTIONAL, AND A CASE OF DISOBEDIENCE WOULD NEVER CROSS ITS MIND. THE MEXICAN ARMY SERVES ITS THE MEXICAN PEOPLE THROUGH DISCIPLINE."

GENERAL RIVAS PENA - A MODERATE MAN IN SPEECH - SAID "TO RESPECT" THE ZAPATISTAS "BECAUSE THEY'RE MEXICANS"; HE CONSIDERED THAT THEY "LOOK FOR A SOLUTION" TO THEIR PROBLEMS, BUT "WE DO NOT AGREE WITH THE METHODS EMPLOYED."

AS FOR LAST WEEK'S ATTACK SUFFERED BY HIS SOLDIERS AT A CHECKPOINT NEAR TUXTLA-GUTIERREZ, THE GENERAL AFFIRMED THAT THE AUTHOR'S OR AUTHORS' INTENTIONS "COULD CONFORM TO AN INTENT TO BREAK THE PEACE AND RECONCILIATION FOR CHIAPAS AND FOR MEXICO."

HE INSISTED THAT A POLITICAL SOLUTION TO THE CONFLICT MUST BE FOUND "BECAUSE WE ARE NOT CONFRONTING A FOREIGN AGGRESSOR; THIS IS A MEXICAN PROBLEM AND THIS MEXICAN PROBLEM MUST HAVE A POLITICAL SOLUTION."

THIS MORNING ABOARD THE MILITARY BASE WAS LIKE ANY OTHER, ONLY THIS TIME -- THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE ZAPATISTA ASSAULT -- THE REPORTERS OBSERVED THE DAILY

ROUTINE OF THE 31ST MILITARY ZONE'S BASE.

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HUNDREDS OF SOLDIERS, ASSIGNED TO THE "FUERZA ARCOIRIS" - A NAME CARRIED BY THE OPERATIVE WHICH PROVIDES SECURITY IN CHIAPAS -, BEGAN THEIR ACTIVITIES WITH MUSTER AT SIX O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING.

WELL UNIFORMED, WELL ARMED, THEY RENDERED HONORS TO THE FLAG, SANG THE NATIONAL ANTHEM WITH GUSTO, AND MARCHED AROUND THE PERIMETER OF THE LARGE PLAZA LOCATED IN THE CENTER, TO THE BEAT OF THE DRUMS, BUGLES AND SOUND OF THE BOOTS ON THE GROUND.

THE COMPARISON WITH THE MARCH OF THE ZAPATISTA INSURGENTS ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF EMILIANO ZAPATA'S DEATH, WAS INEVITABLE. HERE, EVERYONE WEARS PRACTICALLY NEW UNIFORMS; OVER THERE, PATCHED. HERE, GOOD WEAPONS; THE OPPOSITE WITH THE ZAPATISTAS.

CERTAINLY IT WAS KNOWN, BUT THE COMPARISON SO CLEAR, SO VIVID, SO IMMEDIATE WAS STRIKING.

THIS GOES WITHOUT MENTIONING FOOD. TODAY'S MENU - ON A SHEET OF PAPER NAILED TO A TREE - ANNOUNCED:

- BREAKFAST: JUICE, ATOLE RO COMMENT: A MEXICAN BEVERAGE, MILK WITH GRANOLA, SHREDDED BEEF, BEAN STEW, WHITE BREAD, SWEET ROLLS.

- LUNCH RO COMMENT: THIS CULTURE'S LARGE MEAL: VEGETABLE SOUP, RICE WITH CARROTS, TUNA SALAD, MAYONNAISE, BEAN STEW WITH BACON, TORTILLAS, SEASONAL FRUIT, PUNCH, POTABLE WATER.

- DINNER: MILK SHAKE, HAMBURGER WITH FRIES, BEAN STEW WITH CHEESE, WHITE BREAD, SWEET ROLLS.

THE INSURGENTS BARELY EAT TWICE A DAY, AND FOOD USUALLY CONSISTS OF BEANS AND TORTILLAS; AND ON RARE OCCASIONS A PIECE OF MEAT, BE IT JERKY, OR PREPARED IN A BROTH.

HOWEVER, THERE ARE SIMILARITIES HERE AND OVER THERE: BOTH SIDES TROOPS BELIEVE IN WHAT THEY'RE DOING; BOTH SIDES TROOPS BELIEVE THAT WHAT THEY ARE DOING THEY ARE DOING FOR THE GOOD OF THE COUNTRY.

FOR THE SOLDIERS OF THE MEXICAN ARMY, THEIR MISSION IS TO "PROTECT THE PEACE". FOR THE ZAPATISTA ARMY, TO ACHIEVE "JUSTICE, LIBERTY AND DEMOCRACY."

THEIR ORIGINS ARE SIMILAR. PERHAPS SOME MORE HUMBLE THAN OTHERS. BUT OF THE PEOPLE IN THE END. AND, IN

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THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, SOMETHING ELSE MAKES THEM SIMILAR: THE SEPARATION FROM LOVED ONES.

ONLY, THE MEXICAN ARMY HAS FOUND A FORMULA - CURIOUS AND ENTERTAINING - TO DRAW THE FAMILIES NEAR IN SOME WAY AND TO ALLAY THEIR APPREHENSIONS. WHILE WE BREAKFASTED WITH GENERAL RIVAS PENA AND HIS STAFF - MEMBERS OF THE 83D BATTALION RO COMMENT: THE 83D IS PERMANENTLY BASED AT RANCHO NUEVO, 39TH BATTALION, SECOND GROUP OF MORTARS AND A MEDICAL GROUP -, WE WERE SHOWN A VIDEO:

VARIOUS SOLDIERS APPEARED ON THE VIDEO. ONE BY ONE THEY SENT GREETINGS TO THEIR WIFE, MOTHER, THEIR CHILD AND ASKED THEM NOT WORRY, THAT THEY WERE ALRIGHT ...

LATER THE FAMILIES OF SOME CORPORALS OR SERGEANTS, FROM DIFFERENT TOWNS AND CITIES, APPEARED ON THE VIDEO AND ALSO SENT MESSAGES. SOME OF THE MESSAGES SENT BY THE MOTHERS AND WIVES:

- I HOPE YOU RETURN ... IT'S BEEN ALMOST FOUR MONTHS SINCE YOU LEFT...
- I AM PROUD THAT MY SON REPRESENTS THE 83D BATTALION...
- TELL THEM TO BEHAVE THEMSELVES WITH THE POOR PEOPLE...
- DON'T CALL SO MUCH BY TELEPHONE, IT'S VERY EXPENSIVE. IT WOULD BE BETTER IF WE WROTE TO EACH OTHER.
- I KNOW HE IS STRONG ... I KNOW IT'S DANGEROUS, BUT WE ARE PROUD OF ALL YOU HAVE DONE ... MANY BLESSINGS IT WAS THE HUMAN PART OF THEMSELVES, OF THEIR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS. HOW, THEN, DO YOU KEEP UP THE MORALE? THE GENERAL ANSWERED: "MORALE IS OBTAINED WITH TRAINING ... THERE IS A VERY POSITIVE ENTHUSIASM.

AND AROUND THE PERIMETER - AND UNTIL THE MOMENT A PEACE IS SIGNED, THAT'S THE WAY IT WILL BE - THE TRAINING WILL CONTINUE.

COMMENTS: 1. (~~REL UK, CAN, AUS~~) PUBLIC RELATIONS

A. THE FACT THAT THE MEXICAN ARMY INVITED THE PRESS ONTO ANY BASE IS UNUSUAL; THE FACT THAT THE BASE WAS RANCHO NUEVO IS SIGNIFICANT.

TALKING TO THE PRESS GOES AGAINST THE INSTITUTIONAL NATURE OF THE MEXICAN ARMY. HOWEVER, THE ARMY BELATEDLY REALIZED THAT WHETHER OR NOT THEY

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WERE SUCCEEDING IN THEIR EFFORTS IN CHIAPAS WAS IRRELEVANT WHEN THE EZLN APPEARED TO BE WINNING THE POLITICAL BATTLE AT HOME AND ABROAD.

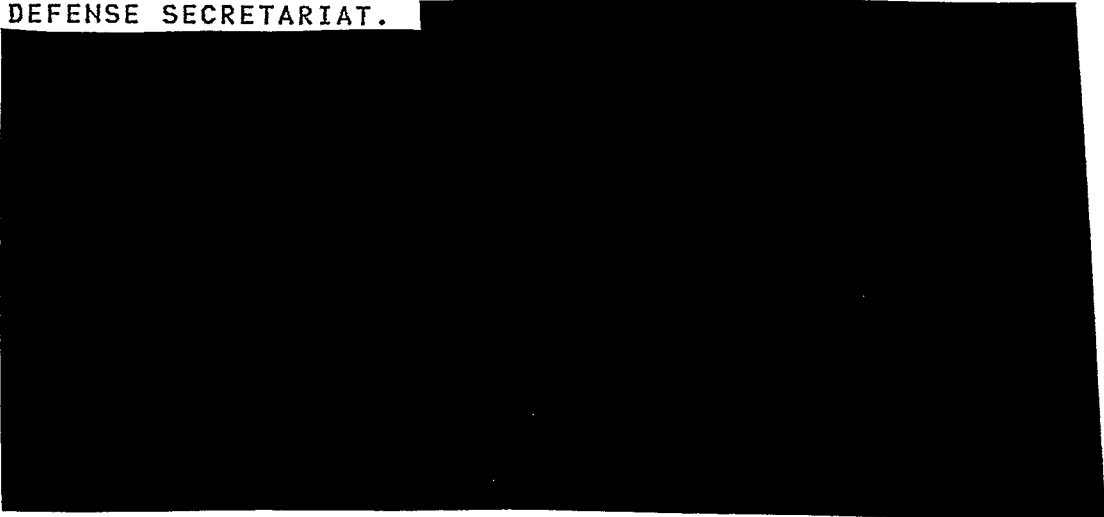
B.



C. FOR THE FIRST TIME THE ARMY IS ATTEMPTING TO PUT A HUMAN FACE ON THE INSTITUTION. IF THE ARMY IS TO CONVINCING THE MEXICAN PUBLIC THAT IT IS TRULY AN ARMY OF THE PEOPLE, THEN IT MUST CONVINCING THE PUBLIC THAT THE INSTITUTION IS MADE UP OF PEOPLE LIKE THEM. THESE SOLDIERS COME FROM THE SAME NEIGHBORHOODS, ARE SONS, BROTHERS, FATHERS, AND HUSBANDS.

2. ~~(REL UK, CAN, AUS)~~ LOGISTICS/SUPPLY

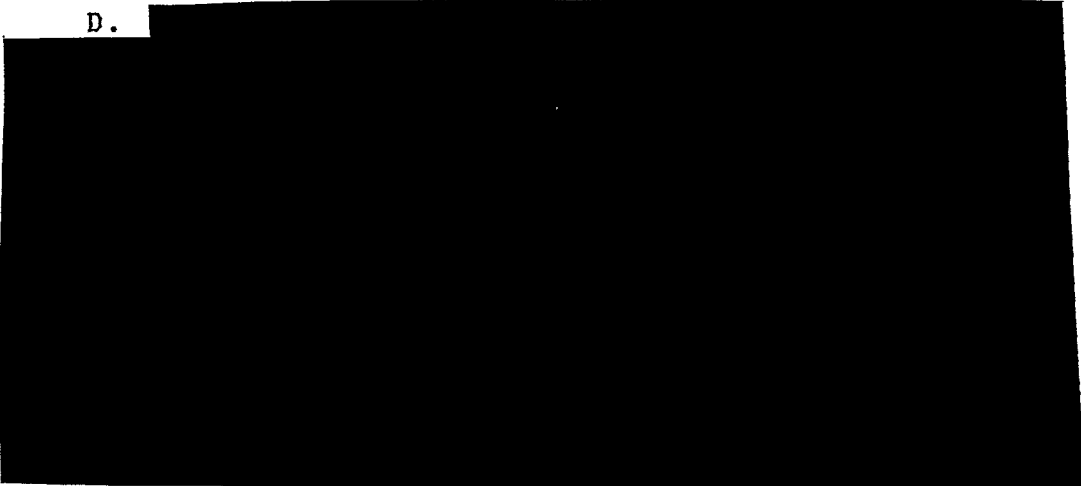
A. THE ARMY'S LOGISTICS WAS INADEQUATE TO THE TASK WHEN THE CHIAPAS INSURGENCY BEGAN. SIMPLY KEEPING THE SOLDIERS FED OVERWHELMED THE MEXICAN DEFENSE SECRETARIAT.



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C. THOUGH FIELD EXPEDIENT KITCHENS HAVE BEEN MOVED INTO NEARBY BUILDINGS, THERE ARE STILL NO CP OR GP TENTS, FIELD MESSHALLS, PORTA-POTTIES, ETC. SOLDIERS EAT WHEREVER THEY CAN FIND A PLACE TO SIT IN THE OPEN. QUARtermasters ARE SEEN DAILY IN THE TOWNS BUYING FOOD ON THE ECONOMY -- BREAD FROM THE BAKERIES, TORTILLAS FROM THE GOVERNMENT SUBSIDIZED TORTILLA SHOPS, MEAT AND FRUIT IN THE MARKETS, ETC. MILITARY VEHICLES WAIT IN LINE AT GAS STATIONS LIKE EVERYONE ELSE.

D.



ADMIN

PROJ: (U) .
COLL: (U) AC.
INSTR: (U) U.S. [redacted]
PREP: (U) [redacted]
ACQ: (U) [redacted]
DISSEM: (U) [redacted]

DCSD, POL).

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