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(b)(2),(b)(3):10 USC 424

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MRN: 5042341
ICNbr: TED8258

Date/Time: 042341Z MAY 99
Precedence: ROUTINE

Subject: (b)(2),(b)(3):10 /MILITARY
INVOLVEMENT WITH CHIAPAS
PARAMILITARY GROUPS (U)

Cable Text:

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ACTION INR-00

INFO LOG-00 INL-01 WHA-01 TEDE-00 SAS-00 /002W
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INFO DIA WASHDC / (b)(2) //

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~~SECRET~~ SECTION 01 OF 02 (b)(2)

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COUNTRY: (U) MEXICO (MX)

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SUBJ: (b)(2),(b)(3):10 USC 424 /MILITARY INVOLVEMENT WITH
CHIAPAS PARAMILITARY GROUPS (U)

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

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01D514, box 6 (47399), folder PGOV Chiapas 1999

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SUMMARY: (S) ARMY HUMAN INTELLIGENCE TEAMS WERE INVOLVED IN TRAINING AND SUPPORTING CHIAPAS INDIGENOUS ARMED GROUPS.

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TEXT: 1. (S) (b)(2) BY MID-1994 THE MEXICAN ARMY HAD PRESIDENTIAL APPROVAL TO INSTITUTE MILITARY TEAMS IN CHARGE OF PROMOTING ARMED GROUPS IN THE CONFLICTIVE AREAS OF CHIAPAS. THE INTENT WAS TO ASSIST LOCAL INDIGENOUS PERSONNEL IN RESISTING THE ZAPATISTA NATIONAL LIBERATION ARMY (EZLN). MOREOVER, DURING THE DECEMBER 1997 ACTEAL MASSACRE, ARMY INTELLIGENCE OFFICERS WERE INVOLVED IN OVERSEEING ARMED GROUPS IN THE HIGHLANDS OF LOS ALTOS, IN CHIAPAS.

2. (S) (b)(2) THAT AS EARLY AS SUMMER 1994 THE ARMY CREATED SPECIALIZED HUMAN INTELLIGENCE (HUMINT) TEAMS RESPONSIBLE FOR GATHERING INTELLIGENCE FROM INDIAN COMMUNITIES PRIMARILY IN LOS ALTOS AND LAS CANADAS, BUT WITH THE INTENT OF HAVING OTHER SIMILAR UNITS OPERATING IN AREAS SURROUNDING THE ZAPATISTA COMMUNITIES IN CHIAPAS. THESE GROUPS WERE COMPOSED PRIMARILY OF YOUNG OFFICERS IN THE RANK OF SECOND AND FIRST CAPTAIN, AS WELL AS SELECT SERGEANTS WHO SPOKE THE REGIONAL DIALECTS. THE HUMINT TEAMS WERE COMPOSED OF THREE TO FOUR PERSONS, WHO WERE ASSIGNED TO COVER SELECT COMMUNITIES FOR A PERIOD OF THREE MONTHS. AFTER THREE MONTHS THE TEAMS' OFFICER MEMBERS WERE ROTATED TO A DIFFERENT COMMUNITY IN CHIAPAS. CONCERN OVER THE TEAMS' SAFETY AND SECURITY WERE PARAMOUNT REASONS FOR THE ROTATIONS EVERY THREE MONTHS. IN ORDER TO GAIN THE SUPPORT OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND COLLECT INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION, THE ARMY HUMINT TEAMS ASSISTED ARMED GROUPS WITH TRAINING AND PROTECTION FROM ARRESTS BY LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES AND MILITARY UNITS PATROLLING THE REGION.

3. (S) (b)(2) PRESS REPORTS OF THE ACTEAL MASSACRE RAISED THE PUBLIC'S ATTENTION OF THE ARMY'S SUPPORT TO THE ARMED GROUPS, BUT AS OF YET NO ONE FROM THE ARMY HAS BEEN FOUND DIRECTLY GUILTY, NOR HAS THE EXISTENCE OF THE HUMINT TEAMS BEEN REVEALED. ADDITIONALLY, WHILE THE PRACTICE OF DIRECT SUPPORT TO THE ARMED GROUPS HAS BEEN REDUCED, ARMY HUMINT TEAMS CONTINUE TO OPERATE IN THE CONFLICTIVE AREAS OF CHIAPAS. THE TEAMS ALSO CONTINUE TO RELY ON THE SUPPORT OF ARMED GROUPS TO PROVIDE THE MILITARY WITH INFORMATION ON EZLN SYMPATHIZERS.

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CHIAPAS PARAMILITARY GROUPS (U)

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